

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS. ILLUSTRATED.

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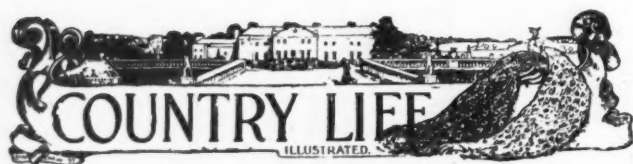
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Photo. ALICE HUGHES,

MISS MURIEL BELL.

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THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.

The Editor will be glad to receive for consideration photographs, instantaneous or otherwise, besides literary contributions, in the shape of articles and descriptions, as well as short stories, sporting or otherwise, not exceeding 2,000 words. Contributors are specially requested to place their names and addresses on their MSS. and on the backs of photographs. The Editor will not be responsible for the return of artistic or literary contributions which he may not be able to use, and the receipt of a proof must not be taken as evidence that an article is accepted. Publication in COUNTRY LIFE alone will be recognised as acceptance. Where stamps are enclosed, the Editor will do his best to return those contributions which he does not require.

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BIG GAME FROM . . THE CAPE TO CAIRO.

THE Deputy-Administrator of Northern Rhodesia has issued a notice proclaiming the whole of the district known as the Mweru marsh as a game preserve. The district thus set aside as a sanctuary is on the northern border of Rhodesia, and is bounded on the west by Lake Mweru. The whole region is south-west of Lake Tanganyika, but according to the maps does not form any part of the lake systems connected either with the Nile or the Zambesi. It lies near the origin of the tributaries which ultimately find their way into the Congo, though the head-waters of all three of the great rivers rise in such a confined area that it is quite possible that the swamps drained by one are wrongly ascribed to another.

This is the practical answer to a movement set on foot four years ago by some prominent sportsmen and naturalists to secure a grant of 100,000 acres in Mashonaland or the adjacent territories and empark it; but the step has been taken by the Government, not by individuals, and whatever measures to enforce it are practicable in the present state of the country will have Government sanction and support.

So much has been written, with every good intention, of the destruction of African big game, that we feel no little satisfaction in drawing attention to the measures now being taken to arrest this, and to the grounds of hope that the surviving stock may in a measure be preserved or even increase in numbers.

In dealing with a subject so vast as the fauna of half a continent, it is difficult, in any other case, not to speak in terms too general to be of practical interest. But Africa is different from other continents in this as in other natural features. Roughly speaking, the natural game country of Africa is the south—where the large fauna has been much reduced, but could be reproduced in part—the whole of the eastern half of Central Africa, the Soudan, and Nile tributaries from both sides of the main river. Western Africa, the property of France and the Congo State, is not a game country, and never will be, and the cannibalism there rampant is largely due to the almost total absence of any form of native game. The result is that the natives look on human flesh as better than none, and behave accordingly.

British control, in one form or another, dominates the main part of the big game region of Africa, except that niche assigned to Germany, and the big slice of Somaliland which we have unfortunately had to hand over to Abyssinia; and as big game preservation is regarded favourably by public opinion generally, the extension of our Empire over the new territories occurs at a very favourable moment. Governments and Governors no longer think this kind of question beneath their notice, but are very cordially disposed to do what they can in reason to give game some protection from wasteful slaughter, while in many cases an enlightened opinion sees in its continued existence a source of direct revenue from licences and of annual indirect receipts from the pockets of sportsmen.

We are also fortunate in the great Englishmen who at present control Africa. Mr. Cecil Rhodes, who never loses touch with public feeling in South Africa, is keen on preserving the big game, and gives any movement in its favour his public and private support. In the old colony he has set an example by turning Table Mountain into a national park and keeping a whole preserve of South African animals round his own residence, while in Rhodesia he has from the first set limits to the shooting of big game. In the north Lord Cromer is already considering what measures can be taken to regulate the killing of wild animals in the provinces recovered from the Dervishes, and is quite ready to consider proposals for the protection of game birds in Egypt. In British East Africa arrangements are already being made for the protection of game in concert with the German authorities, while a little further south the elephant marsh has been set aside as a sanctuary for the last three years. Minor preserves exist in Cape Colony, and in the Chartered Company's territory generally the regulations forbid the killing of game except as food, though the skin-hunting "trek Boers" are with difficulty held in check in the present state of the country.

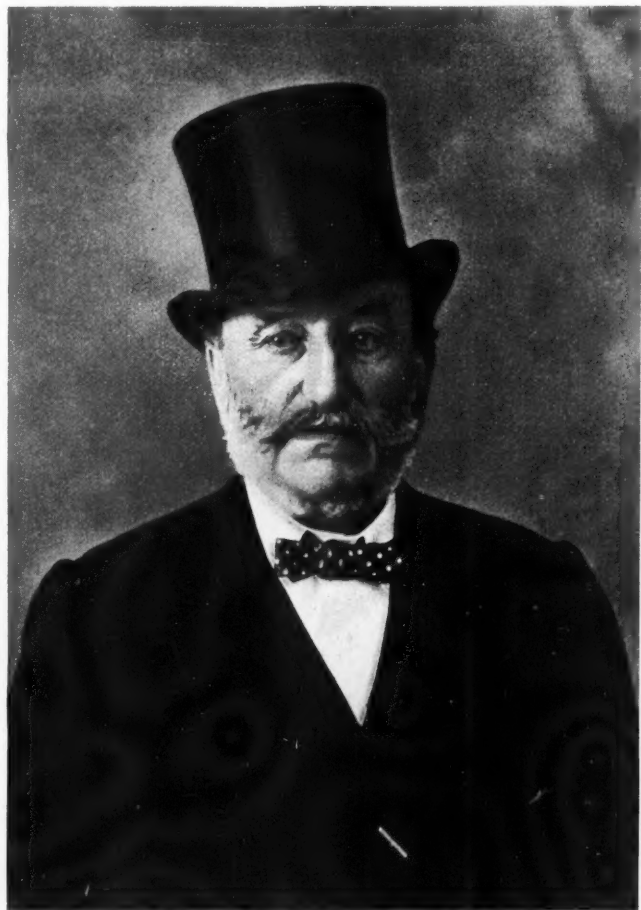
Mr. H. Anderson-Bryden is of opinion that south of the Zambesi the native hunters with their guns will still prove too destructive for the game to last, because there are too few whites to stop them. We hope this forecast may prove incorrect, though Mr. Bryden knows the situation. But there are districts of East Central Africa still swarming with game, where, or perhaps because, there are practically no hunting tribes in the neighbourhood. Mr. Neuman, when hunting elephants near Mount Kenia and Lake Rudolph, for instance, found himself among a race of people who lived almost entirely upon wild honey. There the wild animals of all kinds, if not as plentiful as in the veldt in the days of Gordon-Cumming, were so numerous as to leave an impression that the good old days had not quite passed away. Herds of elephants bathing in the lake, with white egrets sitting on their backs, troops of zebras, and following the zebras lions, and any number of black rhinoceros. Here at least is the nucleus of a reconstruction of the fauna of the continent, for the animals are those suited not only to the central zone, but also species once found south of the Zambesi. We note that in the Sirdar's last journey, from Khartoum to the Red Sea, he reports that the line of the Atbara is not yet safe. This means that the best part of the north-eastern hunting grounds is still closed. When it is opened up, we shall await with interest the measures taken by Lord Cromer to deal with the regulation of sport.

Meantime we take it that the following considerations must affect any rules made. In the first place, skin hunting in any form must be stopped. This is no hardship to the natives, because in nine cases out of ten the skin hunter is either a white, or a native employed by a white, or by an Arab trader, who has no interest whatever in the soil. Where *bonâ-fide* hunting tribes exist it is nearly always in a good game country, and by inference one thinly inhabited. These men, like the Hamran Arabs on the Atbara—if the Mahdi has left any of them—can be employed as shikaris, in attendance on European sportsmen. There is no reason whatever why big game hunting in countries conquered by the Anglo-Egyptian Government should be entirely free. By all means let them charge a licence, and use part of the

money to pay the expenses of preservation, as the American States do in the State forests. Lastly, unless there is reciprocity and a fair value in exchange, shooting in British territory should be reserved for Englishmen first, and foreign sportsmen should only be admitted either by extra payment, or on giving a guarantee that they will shoot in a sportsman-like manner, and treat the natives on our lines. Sport in some parts of Somaliland has been entirely ruined by French and German expeditions, who not only shot more game than they could use, but employed unfair means to obtain it, and bullied the natives. In at least one case this led to a quarrel, in which a number of natives were shot, and European sportsmen gained a bad name for cruelty and indifference to life, even among these rude Mahommedan tribes.

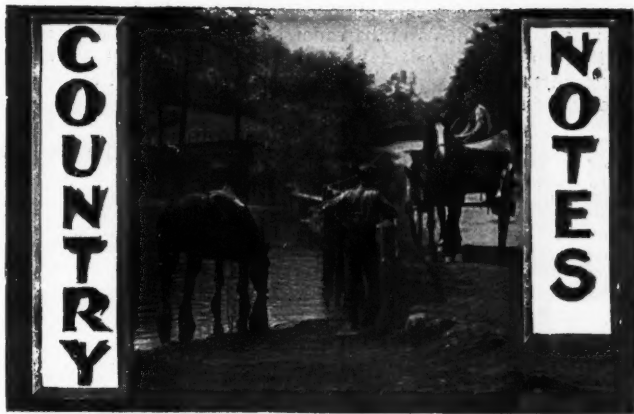
The Late Duke of Beaufort.

THE Duke of Beaufort's death removes a figure always in the front ranks of country life and of the cream of English sport. Until the closing years of his life, Badminton was maintained with a magnificent hospitality scarcely paralleled even in the great houses of England. The Badminton pack was kept up on a scale commensurate with everything else in which the Duke was interested. Seventy-five couple of hounds were in the kennels, and from 80 to 150 horses in the stables. A stud of thorough-breds in the park was added to the equine part of the establishment. For fifty years he made hunting with his own hounds his favourite amusement, and would leave London by the 4 a.m. newspaper train to be in time for a meet if kept in town. But his knowledge of other branches of sport, and above all of driving four-in-hand, was quite equal to his mastery of all the details of the chase.



Elliott and Fry. A CHARACTERISTIC PORTRAIT. Copyright

Well as this was known in the circles familiar with the Duke's practical pre-eminence in these matters, it was not until the first volumes of the Badminton Library appeared to delight and instruct present and future generations of sportsmen that his powers of imparting his experiences and methods were known to the world. The volumes on hunting, driving, and racing were largely the work of his own pen, and for matter and manner it would be difficult to find anything to surpass them. He did not shrink from the difficult task of editing or advising constantly on the production of these volumes, which are likely to remain the greatest authority of the Victorian era on the chase, the road, and the Turf. The Marquess of Worcester, who succeeds to the Dukedom, has for some years been Master of the Badminton pack, and is as popular and as much appreciated in the county as his father before him.



THE lakes of Killarney for sale! Such is the announcement of the *Freeman's Journal*. The Herbert estate of Muckcross has been sold to the tenants, and the mansion, demesne, and deer park, and the most admired parts of the lakes of Killarney, will be put up for sale. What a price the whole property would fetch if it were only in Scotland! As a sporting estate there would be a dozen purchasers competing for it. But then it is in Ireland, and as no one feels safe in buying Irish land, and no one is quite sure that if he rents sporting rights he will be allowed to enjoy them unmolested, the English public are shy. Should the figures of this sale, when effected, transpire, and any comparison with the price given for Scotch properties be available, it will be a useful text for Mr. Redmond, who is taking a sensible view of this side of Irish economics, to address his constituents about.

There is not much to be said that is new about the agricultural position. The season is a normal one, and on the whole everything bids fair for a good harvest at the usual time. But this, of course, is assuming that the weather will remain normal through June and July. The wheat crop looks especially well for the time of year. Many fields can be seen which would cover a hare, and the colour is of that dark green which betokens a vigorous growth and a good root-hold on the land. The information goes that the same condition of affairs exists all over Europe, and this has a prejudicial effect on the corn trade. It may spurt for a day or two, but soon the prevailing dullness resumes its sway. This continued low price for wheat is one of the most curious phenomena of the commercial world. Every other commodity has its ups and downs. But just now iron, copper, cotton, and other things are booming. It is only wheat and wool which seem to have sunk down into a rut of low prices, which defeat even the persistence and the millions of the Chicago speculators.

The prospects for the coming hay crop are fairly good. The grass has grown slowly, but it has grown well, and there is a fair prospect for that bountiful supply of bottom grass without which hay is of very poor account. May has come in with cold winds, and a suspicion of frost at night, but the cattle in the fields seem to be doing very well. They ought to receive artificial food for the present, in the shape of a ration of decorticated cotton-seed cake. Flocks are coming on well, and some high prices have been made for early lambs which are fit for the butcher. Last year's seeds and clover seem to have stood the winter well, and the crop of artificial grass is likely to be a heavy one. Preparations are being pushed forward for the sowing of early swedes—an operation which is likely to be an easy one, owing to the splendid state of the soil.

A curious thing about the backwardness of the present spring is that it seems equally backward over so large an area. Sussex and Kent show no advantage over Yorkshire and Lancashire in their leafage, and the present annotator is assured that Devon even can show little or no advance on either. Of course "green things growing" move quickly at this season, and there will doubtless be a great change in the few days between the scribbling of this note and its publication, but for all that it may hold good as an historical remark.

The romantic story of the birth of the late Sir R. Warburton, who for many years controlled the tribes of the Khyber by his personal ascendancy, reads like a tale of the Crusades. His father was one of the prisoners made by the Afghans when General Elphinstone's army was destroyed, but, like many of the English, was kindly treated by his captors. If he did not enjoy all the consideration which the hostages kept at Cabul in the house of the good Zemaun Khan met with, he was so fortunate as to win the love of the daughter of the Afghan chief in whose house he was kept. She aided him to escape, and he married her. The late Sir R. Warburton was therefore half Afghan. A correspondent of the *Times* states that during the recent war on the frontier, Sir R. Warburton, who had retired

from active service, was summoned to the English headquarters. There the tribesmen's ambassadors were careful to explain to Warburton that they had no quarrel with him, but with the Government, and begged that he would not think that they were shooting at him when fighting recommenced.

The Agricultural College at Cirencester has had its herd of cattle tested for tuberculosis. Of these only one out of twelve showed the taint. But in view of the extraordinary percentage of the disease among Her Majesty's herd, further particulars are desirable—the yearly death-rate from all causes, for instance, and the number of animals killed from time to time on account of disease. Also whether there have been any cases of advanced tuberculosis among the attendants.

Another point which might be investigated is the possible connection between tuberculosis and the unaccountable attacks of so-called "scour" which are prevalent in some seasons. As a rule, it appears to be only the adult cattle which are tuberculous—a curious thing, by the way, if milk is the great source of infection—but it would be quite in accordance with the behaviour of the disease in other animals if it took a different and more rapid course in the young (in calves), for by the analogy of human consumption the alimentary canal, which is affected in "scour," is exactly the part which we should expect it to attack.

A capital article appears in *La Science Sociale* on Eton as a type of English public schools. It is from the pen of Mrs. Hugh Bell, who is perhaps the best interpreter of English ideas to French minds—partly on account of her French style, which won her the honour of having a French play acted by the leading French company. But she sets out in a manner which will be clear to French readers the real way of life of an English public school. How the boy takes on a "family pride" in the place when he goes there; how he makes it part of his business to behave like a gentleman, and to enter that family compact of honour and good form which makes the life of gentlemen possible. And she gives a bright account of the training, general and particular, which the best class of English boys receive. She speaks enthusiastically. In view of the present state of public life in France, we think her article may do real good by suggesting a fresh start for the next generation.

The *Artist* for May 1st contains a charmingly-written article on the late J. G. Wolf, by Mr. A. Trevor Battye, who was a personal friend of the deceased animal painter. The paper is headed by Landseer's remark that Wolf was "without exception the best all-round animal painter that ever lived." His history is like that of one of the early Italian painters, it was so purely a case of native genius prevailing. Mr. Trevor Battye notes that his first paint-box was bought for a penny from a pedlar in the German village where he lived; and to make a brush he trapped a stone martin—the next best thing to a sable for brush-making. When quite a lad he made such exquisite paintings of peregrine falcons, done in miniature, to save the expense of paint and paper, that they were a safe credential wherever he showed them. But he was just as good at beasts as at birds. As specimens of his work the *Artist* gives away a number of sketches, some astonishing studies of chamois on steep mountain-sides. We are certain that these alone will be a perfect revelation to any intelligent naturalist. The chamois spread their hoofs, sit down on the slopes like cats, squat like rabbits, or lean against the roof-like mountain-side as does a mountaineer with an alpenstock. He watched animals as almost no one has ever watched them before or since, and his artistic method was as vigorous as that in Michael Angelo's sketches.

Those among our yachting readers who find themselves in town on Wednesday next, May 10th, and can spare the time, should certainly pay a visit to the Shipping Exchange at two o'clock, when a sale of yachts takes place that promises to develop in the future into something approaching historic interest. When we say that the most famous cutter of the century is to be disposed of by auction, we certainly do not overrate the merits of the celebrated *Britannia*, which was raced for so many years with unparalleled success by the Prince of Wales. She was built at Glasgow in 1893 by Messrs. D. and W. Henderson and Co., and when she was sold four years later she had placed no less than £10,000 worth of prizes to her owner's credit, besides several Queen's cups. *Britannia*, it should be remembered, furthermore, encountered strong opposition during the seasons she was owned by the Prince of Wales, for not only did she make her first appearance in a year of great revival in big cutter racing, but subsequently she had also to encounter such well-known fliers as *Ailsa*, *Meteor*, and *Bona*. On the day mentioned above two other famous yachts are to be sold, viz., the grand old yawl *Formosa*, and the well-known cutter *Irex*.

The Hybrid Committee of the House of Commons, sitting on Clause 29 of the Southern Railways Amalgamation Bill, would do nothing to help the poor cyclist, who really has some cause for complaint about the rates charged for conveying his machine and the little care that the rather excessive payment purchases. The Cyclists' Touring Club had addressed a memorial to the committee praying for some consideration of the rates, but the committee would have none of it. On the other hand, the committee did really good work in requiring rates for agricultural parcels to be brought down to those in use on the Great Eastern line. This will be a real boon to the folks in Kent and Sussex, and will probably prove good policy from the financial point of view of the railway companies themselves. With the rate of fares on the boat expresses the committee, discreetly enough, declined to interfere.

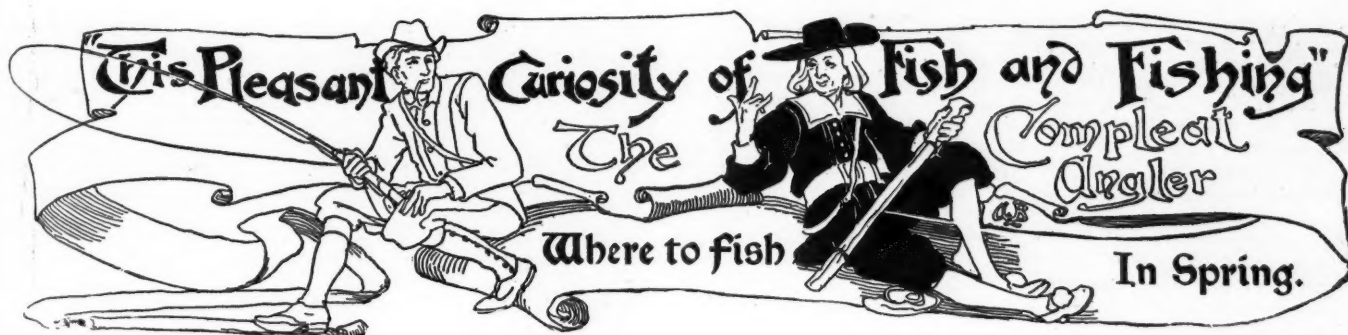
The report of the annual meeting of the Surrey County Cricket Club is very satisfactory reading, in spite of the exceptional and very heavy expense to which the club has been put this year in erecting the new pavilion. But this latter was badly needed, the old one being quite inadequate, and will repay the members in increased comfort over and over again. Besides, the receipts are amply sufficient to warrant the expenditure. Richardson's benefit is announced for the match against Lancashire, on August 24th and following days. It is sure to be a great success, apart from other reasons, because of the immense popularity of this gallant cricketer. Mr. Key is again to give his yeoman's service as captain of the team.

It is not very often in those elevated circles illuminated by "the fierce light that beats upon a crown" that there is any trouble about proving a succession in these days, whatever the trouble may be in practically enforcing the claim; but in a case recently before the Clerkenwell Police Court this difficulty was much in evidence, and it was even doubtful whether the late owner of the crown in question were really deceased. Application was made by Mrs. Brooks to Mr. Horace Smith for information, or information as to means of getting information, about the supposed death of a Mrs. Lee, lately Queen of the Gipsies. By her decease, if proved, Mrs. Brooks claimed to become the rightful wearer of the crown—again supposing this bauble to be in safe keeping and material existence. What is perhaps the more curious is that Mrs. Brooks's enquiry seems to have found an answer, a lady who wishes to be anonymous having sent a letter to Mr. Smith telling him of the death of an old lady named Lee in a tent in the Sandy Road, Hampton Wick. She was known as Queen of the Gipsies, and her funeral at Hampton Wick, where the register would no doubt contain the record, was attended by much of the aristocracy and plutocracy of the gipsy nation. It is a singular tale.

Visitors to the Italian lakes are usually more attracted by the scenery and flowers than by the wild life there. Some are even heard to say that there are no birds in Italy. A correspondent writes from Como: "The first thing which I saw on the lake of Lugano was an osprey, and all day long two or three would be swinging to and fro in front of the town, sometimes going up to a great height, but generally flying low and swooping down just to the surface to seize the small fish which swarm in the lake. When one caught a fish the others would try to rob him of it. They are long-tailed, long-winged brown birds, with a crested head and a rounded tip to the wing. There are several here, too, on Como. Nightingales are common, and sparrows, chaffinches, and goldfinches. I see siskins, too, in cages, yellow wagtails, and plenty of warblers in the villa gardens. Some grey crows are nesting in a mountain cliff near, and I think two lesser kestrels. I saw a black redstart yesterday, and to-day a bird which the boatman said was a falcon that kills serpents. If he was right, I suppose it was a swallow-tailed kite. There are not many swallows here, and what I do see are obviously going North." We hope that with the protection now universal in Scotland we also may be able to watch osprey fishing on their journey to and from the Highlands.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR portrait illustration this week is of Miss Muriel Bell, daughter of Mr. Charles Bell, of Highgreen, Northumberland. Miss Bell's talent as an amateur photographer should be well known to readers of *COUNTRY LIFE*, our portraits of Lady Giffard, Miss Sybil Somerset, and Miss Hilda Brooke all coming from her studio. Miss Bell is also an accomplished whip and horsewoman. She is to be married on the 10th of this month to Captain Middleton Rogers, of the Royals.



HAVE you ever been to Galway or Ballynahinch? ever fished Corrib or Mask? Why not spend your Whitsun holidays there? Catch the Irish mail at Euston at 8.15 p.m., and you will be in Galway by midday the day after.

But do not hurry away at once. This is a queer old town, well worthy of a few hours' inspection. There is the Spanish quarter, called, if I remember rightly, the "Cladagh," or some such name, inhabited by descendants of the shipwrecked mariners of the old Armada. There is the salmon fishery, where you may see the fish netted; the murderous cribs, where you may watch the poor captives vainly rubbing their noses against the iron bars of their prison—prison more cruel than even the Bastille, for none leave here except to meet the grim executioner. It is a sad sight to a fisherman, and one he will scarcely want to see again. Then there is the famous club fishery, where more fish are killed in a short half mile than in any other bit of water of the same size in the world. Here you may see legitimate angling with rod and line and fly—well, yes, and shrimp too. Here you may see the veriest duffer learning his first lesson in casting, while beside him may be found the past-master in the art with 40yds. of line at work. Some people scoff at the Galway fishing club; others don't. *Quot homines, tot sententiae*; but let everyone do as he likes—judge for yourself.

The club consists of about nine members, while the owner of the fishery reserves another rod to himself. It seems a good many to fish half a mile of water, a great part of which is unfishable; but then it is different from any other water, and even the fish seem to recognise this and behave accordingly.

When the members or their friends are not all there together, a visitor can fish for the day for 15s., when one-third of any fish he may catch will be given to him. He will require an attendant at 5s., and half-a-crown's worth of shrimps—prawns they are really, but they call them shrimps. It is all bank fishing, and with the exception of one stretch requires long casting and good fishing. It is possible this somewhat cramped style of angling may bore you, and you may object to being watched by a critical crowd of Irishmen from the bridge. If so, consult one of the Lydons, the bank is generally crowded with them, and say you want a boat to go up Lough Corrib.

Nowadays there is a light railway which will take you to Oughterard, but you miss the river and half the lake by that route. So start after breakfast with a couple of spinning rods



BEAUTIES!

and a fly rod, and trail a brace of phantoms after you. In the river stretch you will probably come across a slat on his way to the sea; treat him as if you loved him; he will be back soon with a new coat on, and if you should happen to come across him then, he will amply repay you for your kindness. Past the old Cromwell castles, past beautiful Menlough, past the pike-haunted rushes which border the splendid snipe bogs belonging to Sir Valentine Blake, your boatman will row you, till of a sudden you come in sight of that glorious sheet of water Lough Corrib. You will row across the broadest part to where

it narrows once more, and here perhaps you will land and have your lunch. As your baits are fishing you must necessarily proceed slowly, so aboard again without too much delay, and on to picturesque Knockferry. Here you and your boatman can put up. You must be prepared to rough it a bit, for it is a regular Irish shanty that you will stay at; but they keep a fair room for visitors, and as some of the best fishing is in this part of the lake you can well manage to exist on trout and plovers' eggs for a couple of days before proceeding further. Remember, however, it is Lough Mask you want to get to, and you must push on to Cong without more than a day's delay. Steamer and rail will bring you back to Galway quickly enough, but drink in the beauty of that wild scenery whilst you fish your way slowly up the lake.

By the time you reach Cong you may have caught a salmon; it is not very likely, but quite possible. You may have



THE SHORT CAST.

killed some big pike or perch; the close season for these fish does not obtain here. You will almost certainly have killed some fine trout, and not unlikely a real sockdollager, somewhere between 5lb. and 10lb. But it is in Lough Mask that you will get among the trout, and if you are in luck's way there you will have sport worth remembering.

There are numerous mountain lakes here, as at Killarney, where you can go, and, if you happen to hit off a day with a favourable breeze, fill your creel to the brim with small brown trout. In Galway itself you may catch some fine trout in the canals and tail races; but the summer is the time for this fishing, when the big lake trout in magnificent condition drop down the river, and suck down a floating fly with great gusto in the evenings.

Connemara is the land of lakes and rivers, and though it is true most of the fishing is now preserved, there are any amount of hotels, the visitors to which have the right of plenty of water.

"The fly is up. Come at once. Have reserved room and boat for you." Such was the telegram I received, towards the end of May last, from my old friend, Mr. Grace, of Killaloe, with whom I had been in correspondence on the subject of dapping. It was my ambition to kill a big trout, and by a big trout I mean anything over 5lb., as I wanted a specimen to put in the billiard-room of our mess at the depot, which is already adorned with stuffed and cast fish, and heads and other sporting trophies from various parts of the world.

Three or four hours by train from Dublin landed me at Birdhill, and as we drove the two miles into Killaloe, I was filled with envy at seeing a boat fishing a grand bit of water on the Shannon, and then again, as we arrived at our destination, by seeing several fine trout, each of 2lb. or 3lb. weight, in a landing-net, which had succumbed to the May-fly that very day.

A trout, a spring chicken, and an omelette, all excellently cooked, and served up by a modest—she was modest, that girl—beautiful—and she was beautiful—young Irish girl, formed a meal that Prince's or the Savoy could not beat. A pipe on

the bridge in the evening before turning in, a chat with my fisherman of the next day, and then to bed.

What a beautiful place Killaloe is! The long bridge with its multitudinous arches, the weir with its constant humming roar, the dark yet clear porter-coloured water of the Shannon clearing after a spate, and the hills all round, combine with the whitewashed houses to make it one of the most picturesque towns in Ireland.

After a sound breakfast we started for our row of some two or three miles up to the lake. I remember there was one thing that puzzled me, new to the game as I was, and that was the absence of our flies. True there were some even thus early dancing about, and some drowned specimens coming down the river, while in the boat were two curious white deal boxes with sliding lids, with small holes drilled in the top. Anxious not to betray my ignorance, I had surreptitiously glanced into these, but found them empty; and fearful that my two boatmen had forgotten the bait, I asked them at last where the flies were. They smiled, and said we had not come to the place yet.

The entrance to Lough Derg is truly beautiful. On the left, in the midst of a small park which comes down to the water's edge, is a mound covered by a dense clump of magnificent trees, the actual site, as my men informed me, of the castle of Brian Boru. The hills, too, came sweeping close down to the lake, covered with glorious gorse in full bloom, the fragrance of which sweetened the whole air. Near their summits the lichen-covered grey rocks stood out bare and contemptful in their grand beauty, looking as if they had half a mind to start from their high holds and hurl themselves at any intruders who ventured to disturb them. I remember a place in India, which these rocks reminded me of, where I was stationed on a hillside waiting for a bear, but where nothing (short of the bear itself) would have tempted me to fire a gun, for fear of bringing an avalanche upon me.

Presently we arrived at a small island, with a few thorn bushes and hazel trees growing on it, its shores fringed with reeds interspersed with gorse. Here each boatman armed himself with one of the deal boxes, and began to gather flies for the day's fishing. Ten minutes sufficed to get enough for half-a-dozen boats, and then we started in earnest.

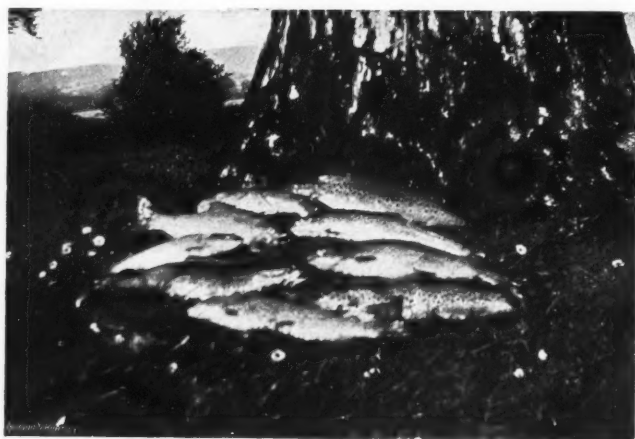
Dapping is best practised with what is known as a double-handed trout rod, about 14ft. long. To the end of your line you must attach some few yards of very light undressed silk line, and to this again about 5ft. or 6ft. of gut; on the end of this it is well to have a hook, and on the hook you impale a couple of May-flies. One other thing is necessary, and that is a good breeze, before which the boat drifts broadside on, and which blows your light line out in front of it, the rod being held so as to allow the flies to dance naturally over the tops of the waves. The trout give grand rises on these occasions, and it is quite exciting when you have spotted a rising fish ahead and know that another moment will put your flies over him. The



LUNCH IN THE GORSE.

fish you stick may be 1lb., or he may be 10lb., which is another charm. You may kill a brace, or you may kill nearly a dozen fish; but whether your sport is indifferent, or whether it is good, if you are a real fisherman at heart the beauty of Lough Derg will eat into your soul.

One day, sitting at lunch, I counted nine different sorts of wild flowers without moving, and the profusion of primroses, violets, anemones, cowslips, bluebells, ragged robin, and above all that magnificent gorse in full bloom ought to be enough to content anyone. Of course, there are other places from which the lake can be fished—Mount Shannon, Nenagh, etc., which have the advantage of avoiding the somewhat long pull up the river, but as I speak only of what I know, I leave them out, for are there not the Westmeath lakes, considerably nearer Dublin than Derg, but I cannot say how to fish them, or where to stay, whereas, in recommending anyone to Killaloe, and my friend



THE BAG.

Mr. Grace, I know that I shall be more than justified in the eyes of those who may take my advice.

I had intended to go on with "Where to Fish in Summer, Autumn, and Winter," but find it is not necessary. Killarney, Killaloe, and Galway all fish better in the summer than in the spring, while the summer visitor to Galway will find that, although his salmon and trout fishing are both improved in June and July, towards the end of the latter month there is white trout fishing to be got both in Galway and Ballynahinch, when the salmon fishing begins to slacken. September is not much of a month in Galway, nor do many men want to fish then, as grouse and partridges are more to the fore; but October is a good month, when the big autumn fish are running, and as water is cheaper then than in the spring, it is generally easy to get a boat on the Shannon somewhere between Killaloe and Castle Connell. Indeed, one of the best beats on the river has been bought lately by an hotel company, who intend to open a hatchery there and do everything in their power to provide good sport for their visitors.

SHOOTING GOSSIP.

IN a former article we attempted to describe the elusive charm of a gun which we said was valued more highly than the important needs of efficiency and durability, and although we gave it a name, we are not sure that we succeeded in fixing its local habitation. This indescribable quality has no separate existence, but, as we hinted, depends upon the craft, skill, and mechanical ingenuity from which it springs. It is obvious, however, that unless a gun possesses a full measure of efficiency and reliability, one would grow tired of its skin-deep and unenduring charm. Durability is never so much a necessity as in the mechanism of a gun, and it relies for its presence mainly upon the simplicity of the mechanism, which is perhaps the chief quality of successful mechanical arrangement; and it is a fact that the most successful types of gunlocks have always been of the simplest character. From the simplest methods of mechanically achieving the projection of his deadly missile, man seems to have progressed to a complex arrangement for the same purpose. As examples of this we may instance the wheel-lock and the match-lock. He then seems to have returned to a more simple method, sloughing off all the superfluous intricacies, which, like the ingenuity of the Chinese, were put to a wasteful or useless purpose. So in this better form we get the simple design of flint and percussion locks, which consisted of the time-honoured tumbler, main spring, bridle, sear, and sear spring, the efficiency and reliability of which all the ingenuity of centuries has not been able to surpass. We have before us a pair of flint-locks, by Joe Manton, which convey not only evidence of that high standard of painstaking workmanship in the beautiful square-fitting limbs, the workman-like stroke upon them, and the undiminished vitality of the main springs, for which he gained his unique reputation, but also of a mind governed solely by mere common-sense, and urged to express it in work of extreme simplicity. Whenever gun mechanism has been conceived and manufactured upon these lines, it has always had a lasting vogue. From that day to this, the essentials of a gun-lock have in no wise altered. When man's ingenuity came to be applied to the abolition of some superfluous limbs like the external hammer—for the aim of all is, in reality, simplification—we know that hammerless guns progressed from the clumsy and inefficient lever-cocking arms, such as the Murcott and the Needham, to the simple barrel-cocking hammerless mechanism with its four main parts simple as a Joe Manton lock, which is the type most generally in use to this day.

In examining guns by reputable makers, we have before now seen departures from this ideal simplicity, such as the substitution of spiral springs for main or important functions, with their cloggy, thick action, in place of the V spring with its light and easy motion. Sometimes again, in the desire to be exclusive, gun-makers are tempted to ignore the mechanism of generally-approved simplicity, with its correct and reliable disposition of well-chosen parts, and to adopt a special form of their own, which is oftentimes an inferior or bastard substitute for a reliable construction. In truth, at the present time, however, it can be said that the majority of gun inventors and gun-makers are chiefly concerned in the production of a mechanism which possesses the highest simplicity and strength. In the march of simplification of a weapon, that is in effecting time-saving improvements to the sportsman, additional parts are required in the equipment of a gun, which add considerably to its excellence, and need not, and we are glad to think do not, complicate the mechanism nor deviate from the aim of a true simplicity. These extra parts (such as ejectors) have been modelled upon the perfect lines of the old gun-lock, and man's ingenuity has applied them to work automatically and efficiently without incurring an additional movement to the sportsman or giving him an extra thought that might interfere with his shooting

Within the last few days the gun and ammunition trades have been agitated by the discussion of a question not altogether without interest to the sportsman. We refer to a combination of all the manufacturers of well-known smokeless gunpowders, formed to protect their interests against the business methods of an equally well-known firm of cartridge-case manufacturers in Birmingham. The latter a year ago brought out a smokeless powder of their own, of the "bulk" variety, which on being tested showed very favourable results for velocity, pressure, and pattern. Since then they have been endeavouring to place upon the market their well-known cases loaded with their new powder, which they are enabled to sell somewhat below the usual price. Umbrage has been taken at this course of procedure by the other manufacturers of powders, the popularity of which, it is said, enabled the case-makers to do a very large business in loaded cartridges. These combined manufacturers decided to decline supplying the case-makers with their explosives unless the latter undertook to give up the manufacture of nitro-compounds altogether, in the belief that it was to the advantage of the former to stop the manufacture of powders and cases by the same firm. This they have not agreed to do, and in consequence their orders for supplies of Schultze, E.C., amterite, and cannonite have been refused by the manufacturers of these nitro-compounds. In this manner the latter expect to bring the offending case-makers to terms. Meantime there are no signs of the latter yielding to what they regard as a species of boycott, and so the battle goes on, and is likely to go on until it is seen which side is the stronger. That will depend greatly on the strength of the hold obtained on the sporting world by the old-established nitro-compounds mentioned. Their producers believe that sportsmen regard the gunpowder they are accustomed to use as of much more importance to their shooting than the particular kind of cases in which it may be contained.

There are, of course, many varieties of cartridge-case, of which there are three well-known manufacturers in England, several in America, and many on the Continent, all of them turning out cases of a good serviceable description, though of various degrees of excellence and at various prices, the continental, as a matter of fact, being the cheapest. There is, therefore, no monopoly in case-making, and only the one Birmingham firm of case-makers are manufacturers of powder also, a powder which, unfortunately for them, is as yet comparatively unknown to shooters. The makers of popular powders, therefore, have some grounds for believing that they are in a much stronger position than their customer, the case-makers, who buy their nitros relying on their popularity with sportsmen to enable them to sell their cases in the form of loaded cartridges. For our part, we do not think that sportsmen accustomed to shoot with particular smokeless powders are likely to change the explosives that they have been accustomed to prefer through any disturbance in the ammunition trade. As a matter of fact, a shooter accustomed to shoot with Schultze, or amterite, or E.C. cannot perform so well with a new powder without at least considerable practice to arrive at its proper "time," during which his shooting is sure to have gone off considerably, even assuming that the new is an equally good explosive with the old. It is very unlikely that to be enabled to use a particular description of case shooters can be persuaded to give up the powder they are used to, have confidence in, and can, as a matter of fact, perform best with in the field. The combination formed against the case-makers is, therefore, a very strong one, on more grounds than one, and so far as we can see the issue of the contest now going on must either result in the speedy submission of the case-makers to the manufacturers of powder, or, if the battle be prolonged to the bitter end, the incursion of the latter into the domain of the former by every maker of nitro-powders manufacturing his own cartridge-cases also, and selling his powder in the form of loaded cartridges only. This, indeed, is the result that we expect, and it may mean an entire revolution in the ammunition trade, towards which things have been gradually working for the last two or three years. The whole tendency of present-day business is towards concentration, and it seems to us unreasonable that three or four firms should be concerned in the making of such a small article as a sporting cartridge, each of them drawing profit out of their particular part of the manufacture. There should be no objection to case-makers turning powder-makers also, any more than there would be to the latter making shot and cases. It would certainly tend to the cheapening of ammunition, and at the same time, we think, to the improvement of it, if that were possible.

NEVIS.



SATURDAY last was an unfortunate day for polo, as rain had fallen heavily during the morning, and the ground was thoroughly soaked by the time the home club at Wimbledon Park turned out to resist the attack of a 1st Life Guards team, consisting of Captains Milner and Schreiber, Mr. P. B. Cookson, and the Hon. F. E. Guest (back). The invaders were, however, met by a strong club team, composed of Messrs. F. L. Wallace, H. Rich, F. O. Ellison, and W. Matthews (back). Considering the amount of rain that had fallen, it was wonderful that the ground did not play slower than it did; and after a good game, in which first one side and then the other had the best of it, victory rested with the Wimbledon Park representatives, by 7 goals to 3.

Another home team subsequently beat the Royal Dragoons by 8 goals to love, but as I did not wait to see this match, I only know the result. The popular verdict among players about the new ground is that it is even now a fast good one, and that it can be made very good indeed; and we are likely to see some very high-class polo here between now and next August. It is a very wise move on the part of the executive to admit the public to a portion of the ground, on payment, and it will do much to popularise the game. We can safely venture to prophesy a successful future for the Wimbledon Park Polo Club.

The fixtures for May are:

Sat.	6th May ...	2nd Life Guards v. Wimbledon Park.
"	13th " ...	12th Lancers v. Wimbledon Park.
"	20th " ...	Stansted v. Wimbledon Park.
Mon.	22nd " ...	1st Ties. Age. Pony Gymkhana.
Sat.	27th " ...	Final Tie. Age. Ladies' Pony Gymkhana.

The new London Polo Club, at the Crystal Palace, is down to play its first match for the Inauguration Cup on May 22nd, after which will come the final

for the Army Cup on the 27th of this month. The match between a colonial and an English team, on June 17th, will be well worth seeing, as will the final for the Provincial Clubs' Cup on the 30th of the same month, and the final of the International Tournament on July 22nd. Altogether the season just beginning bids fair to be the busiest on record, and seeing how many important matches will be going on, on the same afternoons, at four different clubs in the immediate neighbourhood of London, those whose duty it is to write about the game will have a hard time of it between now and July 31st, 1899.

OBSERVATIONS OF A FIELD NATURALIST.

THE TORTOISE AGAIN.

I HAVE previously mentioned the water tortoise as an addition to the fauna of Britain, and since then we have captured two more from the same Thames backwater which had already yielded two specimens, in addition to two others which, within my own knowledge, have been accidentally caught by anglers at Kingston and Guildford. The last caught is the largest of all, and much slower in his movements than the smaller ones. He is evidently an antique specimen, possibly the progenitor of the race which is now well established beyond doubt in the Thames.

BIRDS NEAR LONDON.

Birds' nests have multiplied remarkably during the last few years round London; but it is worth noting that within ten miles of St. Paul's Cathedral—in a rural oasis which has survived by chance amidst the bricks and mortar which we call "the suburbs"—I have this year seen a blackbird, chaffinch, and gold-crest, all sitting upon eggs in one small cedar tree, within seven feet of the ground, while a few yards off a moorhen was covering a nest full of eggs under an arched bower of rushes.

A CRIMINAL IN FEATHERS.

Not far from this haven of domesticity a tragedy was enacted. A pair of great tits flew out of a hedge where a hedge-sparrow had been sitting for some time upon five blue eggs. Knowing the murderous instinct of the great tit, I went to the spot, and there, with her head battered in, and two-thirds of her brains gone, lay the hedge-sparrow dead upon her still hot eggs. The method of the great tit in committing his crimes betrays the practised murderer. He leaps upon the shoulders of his victim from behind, and drives his wedge-shaped bill with powerful, hammer-like strokes into the skull. In an aviary he will even slay so large a bird as the starling after this fashion.

DUCKS v. SWANS.

In the same water which contains the moorhen's nest there are a pair of swans who ought to have nested this year. Indeed, they had twice gone so far as to build a fairly-substantial nest, when they were driven from it by—some ducks! The cock, or male swan, puffed himself out tremendously, and made a brave show of defending the structure; but the leading drake of the enemy rushed at him and drove him with most undignified haste into the water. Since then the swans have been disconsolately floating about in the vicinity of the nests, which the ducks have appropriated as dressing-rooms, for they seem to sit there at all hours of the day preening themselves.

SPARROWS AND FEATHERS.

And what an interest the sparrows take in the ducks' or the swans' toilet! Whenever any water bird comes ashore, it seems to discover a score or so of fluffy feathers—from under its wings or between its legs—for which it has no further need. So it plucks them out one by one, and as they float away upon the wind the sparrows jostle in pursuit, like king crows in India after the first heralds of a locust swarm. The lucky captor of the fluffy feather makes a bee-line for his nest in some distant roof; and the others return to their points of vantage, where they wait for the next bit of fluff. Three breast feathers from a swan would comfortably upholster a sparrow's nest; so one can understand the zeal of the small birds' competition. And there is comedy in the long-necked attitude of surprise with which the swan watches the excited scramble for his cast-off plumes.

THE STARLING'S UPHOLSTERY.

The starlings interfere sometimes and carry off the feather of contention; for, in spite of the extreme untidiness of the result of his labours, the starling is a faddist in the matter of materials for his nest. One pair which build in my roof annually devastate the same flower-bed every year, pulling up the leaves of crocuses, and carrying off the shoots of perennial cornflower, day-lily, and pyrethrum as soon as they appear long enough for purposes of upholstery. It must be a constant source of annoyance to the starling that his green-stuff shrivels up and turns black after it has been added to the nest; but he never despairs. Every morning sees him desperately tugging at everything which he finds in that particular flower-bed long enough to catch hold of. I have seen him fall backwards with

the jerk by which a tough leaf gives way sometimes. As starlings are supposed to have nested under the tiles ever since the house was built, and never throw out the material of the old nests, the roof would probably burn like a haystack if the house caught fire.

QUARRELSOME BIRDS.

Elephants, wrote Kipling, after witnessing wild beast fights in India, fight like men and rams like fools, but horses fight like devils. Starlings, we might add, fight like schoolboys. Half-a-dozen of them are quietly feeding together, when suddenly one appears to have said something which annoys another. In a moment they are at it, hammer and tongs. First one is uppermost, then the other, and all the rest gather round to see fair play. Presently one admits himself beaten, and manages to struggle away, pursued for a short distance by his victorious enemy. In five minutes they are all gobbling and chattering again as if nothing had happened. No damage is done as a rule, because the two combatants clutch each other's powerful feet, and are thus forced to sit down on their own tails face to face, but in such a position that they can hardly reach each other with their bills. Even when one is underneath he can generally manage to hold the other off; for anyone who has

picked up a live starling can appreciate the strength of grip which resides in its claws.

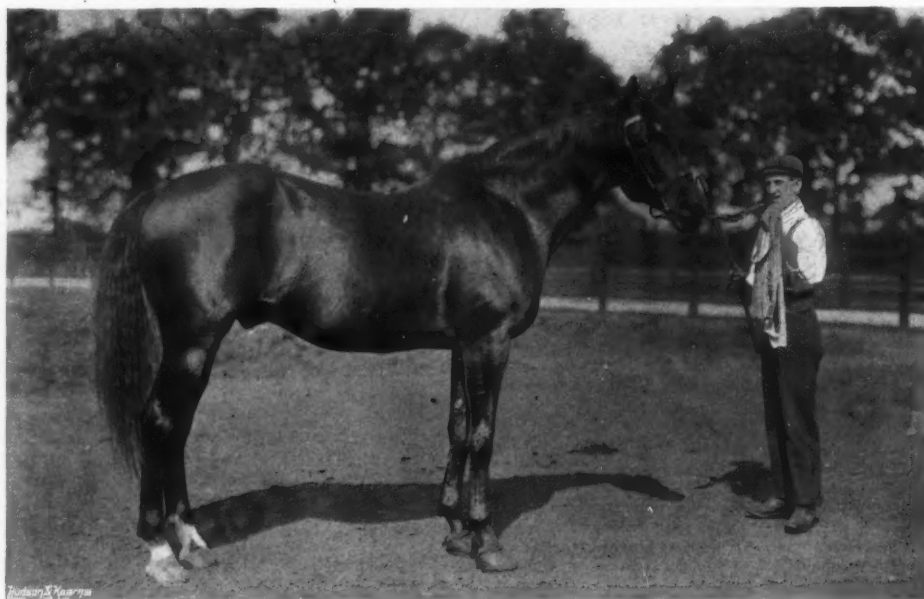
MALIGNED TITS.

Writers in the daily papers who complain of the ravages of birds among the buds of their fruit trees, have most unfairly been classing the tits with the sparrow and the bullfinch as a pest to the fruit gardener. Anyone who has watched tits at work knows that this is a libel. Outside my study window stands a straggling greengage tree, which is never pruned, for the sake of the shade which it gives from the sun in summer, and every day a pair of blue tits who have their nest in an old oak tree close by visit it. I have watched them carefully as they clamber up and down the branches within a few feet of my eyes, and they never pay the slightest attention to a sound bud or flower, but every day they clear off about a dozen little caterpillars from cankered buds. They are very clever, too, in unrolling the young leaves in which caterpillars are hidden, and when the prey lets itself down quickly by a silken thread, they flutter after it, and catch it in mid-air. For sparrows or bullfinches it might not be easy to draw up a brief of defence; but the more tits you have in a garden in spring, the better the fruit crop will be in summer.

E. K. R.

FAIRFIELD SIRE.

THE British Turf has its friends and its enemies, the first who swear by it for having given to this country the finest breed of horses in the world, and as affording a sport eminently suited to the national character, and the others who decry it as an abomination, simply because, like the length of people's lives, the safety of houses and ships, the value of stocks and shares, and almost everything else in the civilised world, it is made a medium for gambling. And yet its history is set with the names of many great men, whilst the country gentlemen of England have ever been amongst its warmest supporters. So long as this continues to be, the sport can afford to laugh at its enemies;



W. A. Rouch.

MINTING.

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and perhaps no better example of it can be offered than that of Mr. R. C. Vyner and the Fairfield Stud. Here is a gentleman who runs horses for pure love of the sport, and who breeds race-horses simply to win races. In this number of COUNTRY LIFE will the reader find several excellent illustrations of this historic stud, including pictures of Mr. Vyner's residence and of the four well-known FAIRFIELD sires—Minting, Marcion, Crowberry, and

Hagioscope. These must be so well known to most people who take any interest in the breeding or running of race-horses that it seems almost unnecessary to say anything about them here; but in case any of the readers of COUNTRY



W. A. Rouch.

FAIRFIELD.

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LIFE may care to read anything about them, I will give just a brief outline of the career of each. To begin with the best of all, MINTING was a horse who would have carried everything before him in ninety-nine years out of a hundred. Unfortunately for him he came in the same year as the horse of the century, Ormonde. He was the best big horse any man living ever saw, combining as he did great size and power with exquisite quality and the most perfect action. When in training he was fit to carry 15st. to hounds, and he moved like a blood pony. He was foaled in 1883, and was by Lord Lyon out of Mint Sauce, by Young Melbourne from Sycee, by Marsyas, who in addition to Minting was also the dam of The Lambkin, winner of the St. Leger in 1884, and Minthe, winner of the One Thousand Guineas in 1889, both of whom were sired by Mr. Vyner's good horse Camballo, by Cambuscan, who was tried to be a certainty for the Two Thousand Guineas which he won in 1875. Minting was an unbeaten two year old, winning amongst other races the Middle Park Plate, and I well remember good old Matthew Dawson's confidence when he brought him out to win the Two Thousand, as he fondly thought. "What sort of a horse must this be?" was all he said when Ormonde beat him over the Rowley Mile. He wisely declined to throw down the



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CROWBERRY.

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on a race-course, for which their owners have the ground to thank. Marcion was a good-looking horse, a good race-horse, and a stayer, and he was by Royal Hampton, son of Hampton (Touchstone, Melbourne, and Bird-catcher) and Princess, by King Tom; out of Emmeline Marcia, by Queen's Messenger, her dam St. Editha, by Kingley Vale. He was last year the sire of eight winners of £2,109, the best of whom was the very useful Alt Mark.

A very nice horse of the hard, wiry, useful type was CROWBERRY when in training, and now he has grown into a big, powerful stallion of the best type. He is by Rosebery, son of Speculum, out of Ladylike, by Newminster, who thus represents the always successful cross of Blacklock and Touchstone, whilst on his dam's side he goes back to Mandragora, by Rataplan, and the blood which made old Parson King so famous in the days of Apology and others of the same family. He ran second to Ayrshire for the Derby of 1888, and at the stud he has sired Sardis, out of Sardica, as well as that useful handicapper King Crow, whilst nineteen of his children last year won him thirty-one races, worth £8,361.

A very stout horse, and the sire of stout stock, is HAGIOSCOPE, most of whose children stay. He is bred to be a good horse too, being by Speculum out of Sophia, by Macaroni



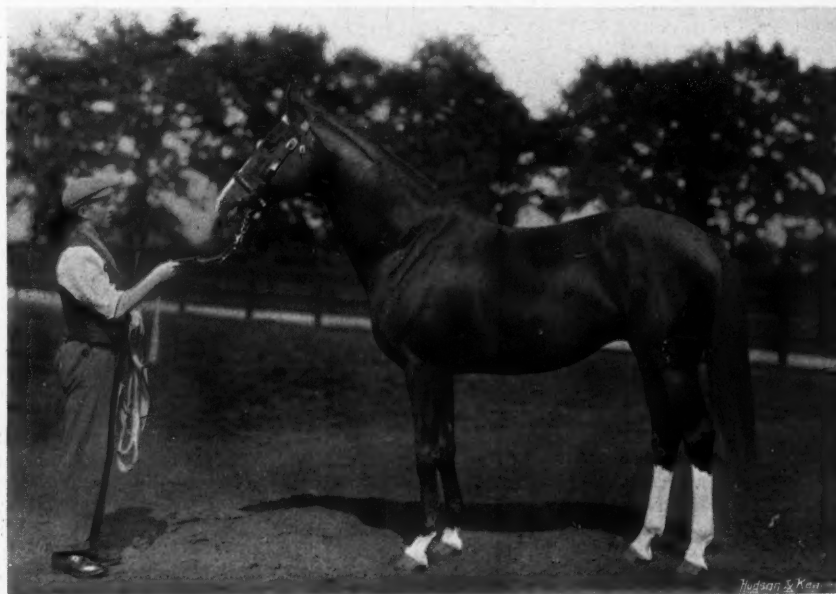
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YEARLING FILLIES.

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gauntlet again to the horse of the century in the Derby, but he went over to Paris and won the Grand Prix, he beat Bendigo at Ascot, where he also won the Hardwicke Stakes, and he won the Jubilee Stakes at Kempton Park in a hack canter with 10st. on his back. He could both go fast and stay, and was an all-round good horse on the turf, whilst at the stud, if he has never yet sired anything so good as himself, he is nevertheless responsible for Minting Queen, Minstrel, a good horse until he grew cunning, Ugly, one of the fastest sprinters of his day, and last year for fifteen winners of £6,094. It may be that he grew too coarse and gross in the early days of his stud career, but when I saw him last autumn he had got better of that and was looking just as a stallion should, and a perfect picture of the high-class thoroughbred sire.

What a difference it makes to a first-class race-horse the year in which he happens to be foaled. Minting had the bad luck to be born in Ormonde's year, and if the shapely MARCION escaped that fate, nevertheless did he run up against such good horses as Isinglass, Raeburn, and Ravensbury. All the same, he won the Ascot Cup as a three year old in 1893, beating those good stayers Ragimunde and Buccaneer, not to mention the over-rated Orvieto, after which he never ran again. Horses who win big races at Ascot have a way of never being seen again



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MARCION.

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from Zelle, by Stockwell, her dam Babette, by Faugh-a-Ballagh. He is the sire of that very useful runner Queen's Birthday, out of Matilda, by Beauclerc, and Northallerton, a fairly good horse in his own class and over his best distance. Eleven of Hagioscope's children last year won eighteen races, worth £3,631.

Mr. Vyner has lately had bad luck in losing Mint Sauce, the dam of Minting, and Lily of Lumley, but he still has plenty of good mares left, of whom I like best, perhaps, Fabiola, by Martyrdom out of that wonderful old mare by Underhand out of The Slayer's Daughter, by Cain, who bred nothing but winners, and who has left a big mark in the Stud Book. But the Fairfield Stud is full of the stout old-fashioned blood which always tells in the long run, and I sincerely hope to some day see Mr. Vyner with another as good as Minting was to carry the violet and white belt as well as did that good and honest colt.

OUTPOST.

Our Rarest Native Bird.

OF the various British birds which at the present time claim special protection, none is more deserving of it than the bearded titmouse, for unless the bearded tits and their nests receive less attention at the hands of unscrupulous collectors in the future than they have done for some years past, the species will soon become extinct within the borders of Great Britain. Every true naturalist would regret the extermination of these handsome little birds; but it is well known that as soon as a species shows signs of becoming rare, the hand of every indiscriminating gunner and bird-catcher is turned against it. Such has been the unfortunate experience of the bearded tit, and to-day there is only one county in England where it is to be found. There was a time, many years ago, when the bearded tit was as familiar a bird as any that haunted the reed-shoals of the lowland meres and water-ways. Its favourite resort was the fenlands of Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, and Lincolnshire, but it was also to be found in considerable numbers amid the marshes of Kent, Sussex, and Essex. The draining of the Fens drove the little bird from that district, and now it is only among the meres and marshes of Norfolk that it may be sought with any possibility of success.

Even on the Continent the bearded tit is becoming a rare bird, and unlike some of the other reed birds, such as the sedge and reed warblers, it has a somewhat limited range. It comes to Holland and Germany as a summer migrant; but never, so far as has been ascertained, has it crossed the North Sea to Britain. The fact that it has for centuries been a resident in this country is looked upon as conclusive evidence that England was formerly connected with the Continent, for the bearded tit will not cross the sea—not even the sunny Mediterranean. Therefore it must have come here in the days when what is now the North Sea was a wide tract of desolate fenland, broken up here and there by coniferous forests, but for the most part much the sort of watery waste land that the Fens were before their reclamation. Charles Kingsley, in his "Prose Idylls," writing of the bearded tit, says: "His central home is the marshes of Russia and Prussia; his food the molluscs which swarm among the reed-beds where he builds, and feeding on these from reed-bed to reed-bed, all across what is now the German Ocean, has come the beautiful little bird with the long tail, orange tawny plumage, and black moustache, which might have been seen forty years ago in hundreds on every reed-rod of the Fens." In this way the bearded tit came to Britain, and it has been its unhappy experience to see, first the wide waste of marsh across which it came submerged by the sea, and afterwards its most favoured haunts transformed from swamp and reed-shoal into fields and pasture-lands.

One needs to be well acquainted with the Norfolk broadland to be able to



W. A. Rouch.

HAGIOSCOPE.

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discover the present haunts of the bearded tit, for little information on the subject can be obtained from the marshmen. They know how rare the bird has become, and, with a view to personal profit, prefer to keep their knowledge of the nesting-places to themselves. Yet now and again, by accident, the casual stroller amid the marshes, or voyager on the inland water-ways, catches sight of a small flock of bearded tits rising out of the river-side reeds, and, after flying a little distance, dropping down into another reed-bed. Having once discovered them, it behoves him, if he wishes to observe them, to be very careful of his movements. By sitting silent in a boat, or crouching down among the reed-culms, he may sometimes be able to watch a pair of them at their nest-building. There is no difficulty in distinguishing the handsome, tawny-buff cock bird from its less brightly-coloured mate, for the former has a black moustache, while the latter is of an ashen white. Neither, when one has once heard it, is there any mistaking its musical call note for that of any other bird, for as it flies to and fro between the rustling reed stalks it utters a metallic "ping-ping," which has been compared to the "clashing of fairy cymbals" and the twanging of a banjo.

Although usually called the bearded titmouse, it has long been a matter of dispute among naturalists whether this rare little bird is a tit at all. Some authorities have looked upon it as a finch, while others have considered it a kind of aberrant bunting. The East Anglian marshmen know it as the reed-pheasant, and in several works on British birds it is described as the bearded seedling. In summer it feeds on insects and the tiny mollusca which abound in the reed-beds, but in winter its food largely consists of reed seeds, a diet which has no attraction for any of the real tits. Its nest is a somewhat deep structure, made of reed leaves, sedge, and grass, and lined with the soft "feather" of the reed tops. As a rule the eggs number from four to seven in each nest, but as many as nine have been found in a nest at a time—a fact which seems to confirm the marshmen's belief that two pairs of bearded tits sometimes make use of the same nest. They vary considerably in size, are china-white in ground colour, and streaked with dark brown, after the fashion of those of the yellow bunting. When the young birds are hatched, the bird-catcher often comes in search of them, pouncing upon them before they can escape from the nest into the shelter of the surrounding reeds. Then it is their hard fate to be shut up in a tiny cage, and, may be, live out their little lives in a window looking out upon some dismal city street, a fate from which all bird-lovers should do their best to protect these beautiful, solitude-loving fen birds.

"CAUSERIE INTIME."

THE olive logs burned brightly on the open hearth; a tongue of flame darting upwards now and again dyed the flowers on the painted ceiling with a warm, quivering reflection, causing them to nod and waver as if wind-swept. Fitful gleams of colour shot in the dancing firelight from the salient points of the old carved Italian presses, the ivory inlay of the antique bureau, the gilt frames of the quaintly-convoluted fifteenth century mirrors, and the blue glaze of the ancient Savona pottery against the cool green walls. The curtains, white dromedary-cloths variegated with Arab emblems, were snugly drawn, and the smoking-room was all the cosier for the rustling of the restless night wind in the verandah. Massey, who had dressed early, sat busy with his pen in the deep recess of the window. Of the other occupants of the room each was in his favourite position. Nose between fore paws, hind legs stretched straight out behind her to the fullest possible extent, proof against draughts by reason of the thick under-fur of her coat, Nikkho lay flat on the cool oaken parquet. "The Wave of the Sea of Japan," *alias* Nami Nippon, curled up on the velvet seat of a vast armchair, having left her lemon and white baby, Yamanami, safely deposited in the housekeeper's room, was thoroughly enjoying a respite from maternal cares. Little Jipse, her big eyes heavy with thought inscrutable, lay at her ease on a sofa cushion, carefully deranged to her satisfaction after endless scratching and many twirls and twists of her tiny body.

Hunched up on the hearthrug sat the Marquis Ito, scorching his piquant little black face as his bright eyes gazed intently into the very centre of the flames. A confirmed old bachelor, next to a bone he loves a puppy, and he was feeling rather injured because Nami's offspring had been requiting his attentions ill by playfully, but painfully, nibbling with needle-pointed teeth the inch of tongue always worn by the Marquis as a sort of Legion of Honour outside the left-hand corner of his mouth for want of a button-hole. Missy and the Councillor had just left the room, after talking over Lord Salisbury's recent speech and mentioning his assertion that there were "things more important than the muzzling of puppy dogs." Now, for all that politics are caviare to the little coterie here mentioned, such a statement was pretty certain not to escape their notice. Dinner-time was still distant, and the hour and place seemed to invite a quiet chat. Massey desisted from his writing and quietly disposed himself to listen. Miss Nikkho set the ball of conversation rolling by the query:

"Did you ever hear such a thing? Who is this Lord Salisbury, Ito?"

"He's a marquis," was the reply, "like me and my godfather in Japan. He is also head-manager to the Queen, as my godfather is to the Mikado."

"Thank you," said Nikkho. "And what is more important than the muzzling of dogs?"

"Give it up," said flippant Madame Nami. "Ask Jipse; she knows everything."

"Well," observed the latter, "I heard Massey say that Lord Salisbury wished he could muzzle his chamberlain."

"What's his chamberlain?" asked Nikkho.

"He must be a kennelman who exercises the dogs," answered Jipse, "for Massey said he was always trotting out the dogs of war."

"Well, then," rejoined Nikkho, "I wish he'd let dogs alone, and muzzle his chamberlain instead."

"Aye, and his walterlongs too, those tyrannical mandarins who make an English dog out to be a foreigner if he takes a fortnight's trip abroad," added Jipse.

"He'd better muzzle himself, and not talk nonsense about things being more important than dogs," said irreverent Nami.

"Oh, he don't need a muzzle. Massey says his bark's much worse than his bite," explained Jipse.

"I saw him once out for a walk," interjected Nami. "Such a beautiful big man—just like a Great Dane."

"Great Dane, Great Dane!" cried Ito in a terrible voice, waking up from forty winks, and only catching the last words. "Where is he? How dare he? Don't be afraid," he added, rushing to the window with challenging barks; "I'll take care of you. I'll soon settle the Great Dane!"

"There's no Great Dane here, you silly boy," said Nami. "I only said somebody was like one."

"Like one!" cried Ito. "But I don't like one. I want to fight one. I'd like to kill one. Nasty big, lumbering, long-nosed creatures!"

"Poor dear Ito, you've been rather deaf ever since you were so bad with distemper, as that stupid doctor called the influenza," said Nami. "You shouldn't be always wanting to fight big dogs."

"Do you remember when they tried to muzzle the Marquis, Nami?" asked Nikkho.

"Rather," replied Nami, with a smile;

"what a fuss he made, and how he tried to bite everybody!"

"They didn't try to muzzle me twice!" cried Ito. "They were afraid. Massey said he'd rather pay the fine. Muzzle me indeed! I should like to know how I could protect you all if I were muzzled."

"Anyway," returned Nami, "they saw it was no use. You know you've no place for a muzzle. It was like trying to muzzle a croquet-ball."

"They'll be doing that next," said Nikkho. "Missy says croquet's a mania, and that it's catching. She says Massey's mad about it. What fun if they muzzle him!"

"Muzzle Massey!" indignantly exclaimed the Marquis. "He'd kill them all first! He's like me."

"At all events he'd growl, and say very naughty words," said Nami, slyly.

At this point Jipse, who had been ruminating over Lord Salisbury's unfortunate phrase, thoughtfully remarked:

"I can't understand that lovely great big man sneering at little dogs. I've always found great big men the kindest to small creatures, and I thought big great men were the same."

"Oh, he was only joking," said charitable Nikkho.

"He shouldn't joke on serious subjects," replied Jipse. "He and his walterlongs are 'just ree-dee-clous,' as Sandy Skye says, with their muzzlings and unmuzzlings; muzzling us Japs, and letting those horrid great dangerous foxhounds rush about the country unmuzzled, free to bite everybody and everything."

"You're right," said Nikkho; "and then they muzzle poor Bob at the farm on the hill, so that he can't drive his silly sheep properly, and Jim Shepherd curses him, and beats him for clumsiness."

"I know whom I'd like to bite," said Ito, sententiously, "and I know who ought to be beaten."

"Well," said Nami, "it just comes back to this: men are stupid things. For my part, I never did think much of them."

"Missy isn't stupid," cried faithful Nikkho, "and Massey isn't very stupid either."

"Missy thinks he is," retorted Nami, "and greedy too. She told him last night that he was silly to sit up devouring midnight oil."

"Devouring what?" asked Ito, rousing himself. "Then he'll give me some. He always gives me a bit of what he eats," added the little *bon vivant*.

"Massey does not eat oil," corrected Jipse; "he eats bones, as we do. I heard him ask Spigot for some bone" (? Beaune) "at lunch."

"I heard that too," said Nikkho, "but it must have been something to drink, for Spigot gave him it in a glass. But, anyhow, he doesn't eat anything at midnight, for he's always fast asleep in my bed long before that."

"Does he scratch your back?" asked Ito, jealously.

"I should think so," replied Nikkho, "and my head as

well. He shouldn't sleep with me if he didn't."

"I wish he slept with me," said Ito, with a sigh. For next to fighting, bones, and puppies, the Marquis loves to be scratched.

"I say," exclaimed Nami, changing the subject, "what do you all think of those new bibs they make us wear at dinner?"

"Well, they're all right enough," said Nikkho, "and the ribbons are very becoming."

"So they are," agreed the Marquis,

"and they keep one's beard clean and tidy, and save one a horrible washing."

But Jipse, who had again been silently busy with her thoughts, brushed away the subject of chignons, that threatened to engross the conversation, by remarking:

"I heard the Councillor telling Missy this afternoon that men had been having another dispute about what they call reason and instinct."

"What are reason and instinct?" queried Nikkho, that indefatigable questioner.

"Reason is men's cleverness, and instinct is dogs'," said Jipse.

"Then I suppose it's men's reason that makes them muzzle us, and dogs' instinct that shows us what fools they are for their pains," suggested Ito.

"I should rather say," observed Jipse, "that men's instinct causes them to call dogs' reason instinct, and that dogs' reason shows them men's mistake. I am only a little dog, but even I can see it's not reasonable for men or dogs to be positive about what they can't know; as, for instance, what goes on inside our brains. How can they reasonably affirm or deny what they can't either see or feel?"

"I call it pure conceit in men to claim all reason for themselves, and refuse us any," said Nami.

"That's it," said Ito; "they think it raises them to keep us down."

"For them," added Jipse, "what they can't explain does



MISSY AND HER FRIENDS.

not exist. So they call us dumb brutes simply because they don't understand our language."

"Massey and Missy are not like that," said Nikkho; "I've often heard them say that we have a regular language, and that they can understand it."

"So they can," agreed little Jipse. "They know at any rate by our tones what we want. I know they always come and let me out when I'm what men call barking because I'm shut up alone."

"Yes," said Nami; "and they know when I'm asking to come in."

"And when I'm calling for my dinner," added Nikkho.

"And when I'm angry and challenging another dog to fight," said the Marquis.

"I'll give you another instance of their want of reason," said Jipse, pensively. "They say we have only a body, but no spirit. Mr. Copingstone told Massey last Sunday that it was wicked to say that dogs had a spirit. But Massey said that was nothing but wicked pride."

"What is a spirit?" demanded Nikkho.

"What we think with, dream with, *love* with—something that has nothing to do with our bodies," replied Jipse.

"Then I suppose it's my spirit that makes me feel I love Missy so much that I would die rather than lose her," said faithful Nikkho.

"And your spirit, Jipse, that makes you think and know so many things. And yours that makes you bark, Ito, when you're asleep," said Nami.

"That's when I'm dreaming of fighting fox-terriers," explained Ito.

"Just so," said little Jipse, "and I think you've all got the right pig by the ear."

"Ah, you're making fun of me," exclaimed Ito, roguishly; "but I'm not to be caught again as I was about the Great Dane. I know there's no pig here. I wish there were. I'd soon turn him out, and give him something to squeal about!"

General hilarity ensued upon this characteristic speech. Ere it subsided, Missy and the Councillor came back in evening dress, closely followed by Spigot announcing dinner. Before the stereotyped phrase had died upon his lips, there was a general scurry and scamper out of the door, a pattering of sixteen little feet along the passage, and a quick selection by the little friends of coigns of vantage round the dinner-table out of the way of the attendants.

BAOUS.

DESTROYING A TITHE BARN.

THOSE of our readers who have been interested in the series of ancient tithe barns given from time to time in these pages will look on the illustrations here shown with real regret, and possibly with keen misgivings for the future of these splendid monuments of the position of English agriculture in the remote past. The great proprietors who obtained the monastic estates on which these buildings were erected have carefully preserved them—at any rate, in recent years. Stanway Barn, the property of Lord Elcho, shown in a recent number of COUNTRY LIFE, and that at Great Coxwell, owned by Mr. Pleydell-Bouverie, are examples. But the tithe



T. N. Green.

OAK PILLARS AND FRAMES.

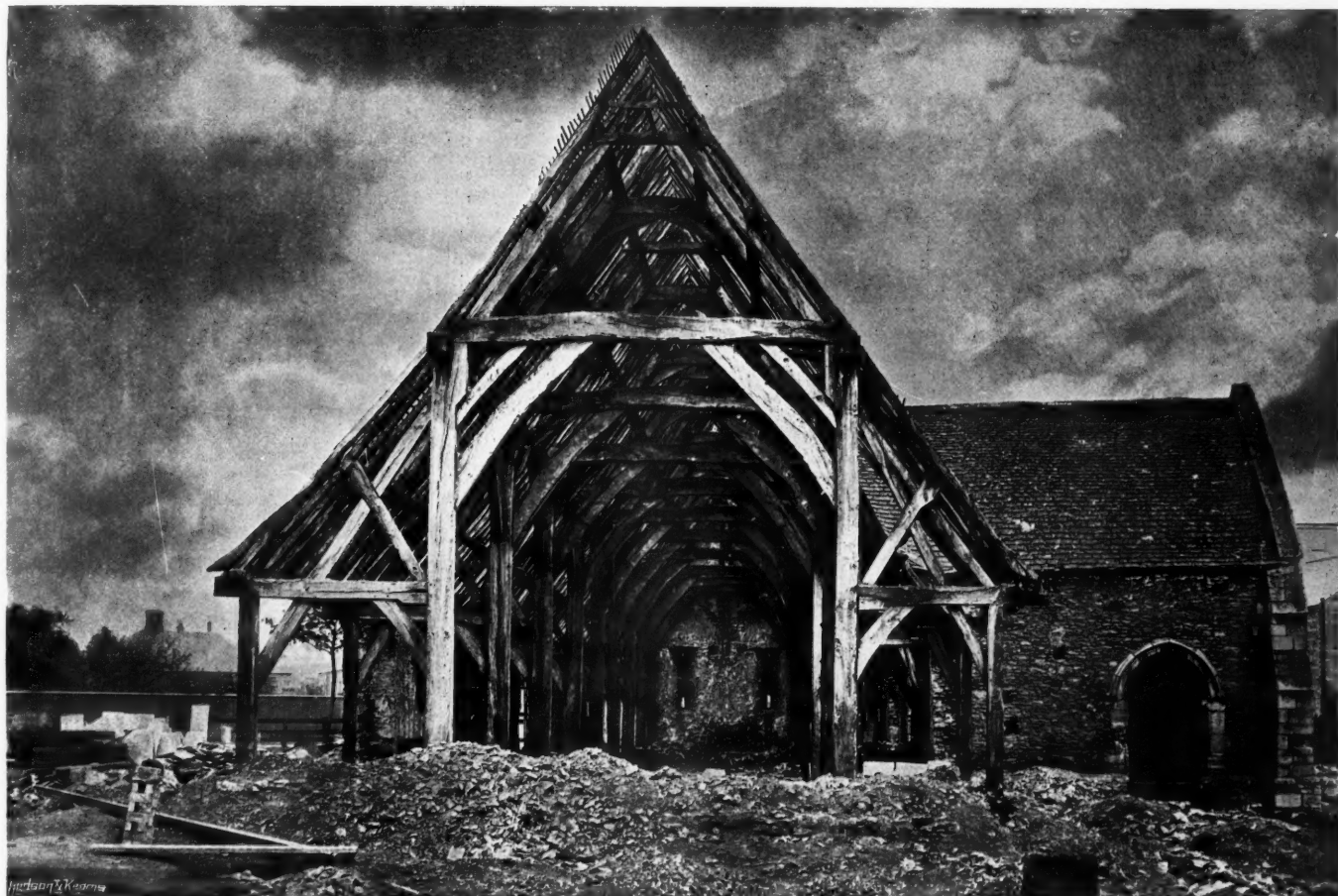
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barn at Peterborough, NOW IN THE WRECKERS' HANDS, actually remained the property of the Church, and was only recently handed over for demolition by those guardians of the Church's interests, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. This body sold the building, which was in perfectly good repair, together with three plots of ground, for about £1,100, bringing in an annual rental when invested in Consols of about £28 per annum. The purchaser was a local builder, who quite frankly announced his intention of pulling the barn down for the sake of the material in it, and to use the ground on which it stood. The mischief,

though temporarily arrested, has gone too far to stop, as may be gathered from the views here shown. But the case is such a peculiarly bad one, and has so much in common with what has recently been done elsewhere in this and the neighbouring diocese of Ely, that a few more details need not be grudged. The story may arouse attention to other activities of this kind contemplated elsewhere.

Not long ago there were two of these tithe barns at Peterborough and another at Ely. The latter was destroyed with the concurrence of the Dean and Chapter. It was an exceptionally fine example of these magnificent and unique buildings. Of the

two at Peterborough, one was pulled down to make a railway station, which also happened at Liverpool. The second, now in course of being destroyed after six centuries of ownership by the Church, was built in 1307. It is 144ft. long and 32ft. broad. On one side are two high stone gables, and in each of these a door with a stone lintel high enough to draw a loaded waggon under. The roof was supported on oak timbers, and was covered with beautiful grey slabs of stone. OAK PILLARS AND FRAMES divided the barn into a nave and two aisles, and lancet windows lighted it on either side. Naturally those



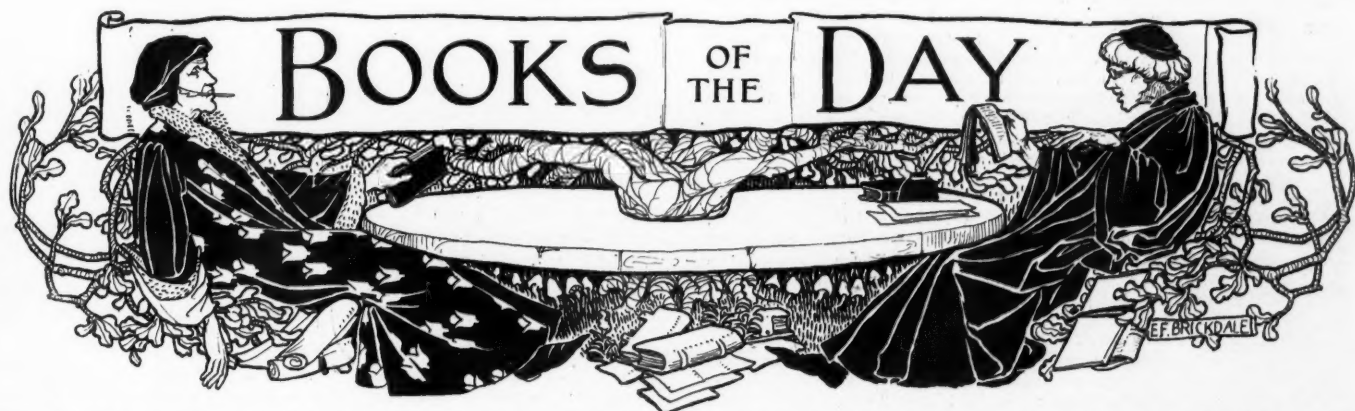
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persons who knew what was contemplated did what they could to arouse public interest in its preservation. Unfortunately local feeling does not seem to have responded very readily. Heavy demands have recently been made on the district in connection with the restoration of the cathedral tower, and a further sum of no less than £9,000 was recently spent on the choir. So the old barn did not get much support, and was handed over for demolition. Of course if the public wish these things preserved they must be prepared to find some of the

funds, though in this case the necessity for the sale was not clearly shown, and the decision came with singularly poor effect from a body of Church trustees. There was no reason whatever why they should not have waited a few years, until local funds had had time to accumulate and some appeal been made to the public. Perhaps some of our readers may be able to suggest where other instances of these mediæval barns are still existing, and whether they are preserved or decaying.



WAR in various forms dominates the four books that have been selected for review this week. The Crimea occupies a good deal of space in Mr. B. S. Mends's biography of his father, Admiral Sir William Mends. The volume edited by Mr. Spencer Wilkinson takes in the careers of twelve famous soldiers, beginning with Cromwell and ending with Wellington. The warfare between capital and labour is illustrated by Mr. John Garrett Leigh in his novel "God's Greeting." Mrs. L. T. Meade and Mr. Robert Eustace's splendidly sensational story, "The Brotherhood of the Seven Kings," may not unfairly be described as a prolonged war of wits between a woman and two men.

Mr. Mends is to be heartily congratulated on the filial piety which, no doubt, inspired him to write the "Life of Sir William Robert Mends, G.C.B." (John Murray). No more interesting contribution to naval literature has been made for many years, considerable though the output has been. Any landsman who knows the deck of a vessel from her keel can follow Sir William Mends, without being fogged by technical details, from the day when, as a "middy," he displayed valuable presence of mind during the loss of the *Thetis*, to the day of the last Jubilee review, when, full of years and honours, he died. The account of the introduction of steam into the Navy, which Mends approved, while many older salts deplored it, takes us back to a period that seems almost antediluvian. But the Crimea, as surveyed from the quarter-deck, is the chief

theme of this substantial volume. Quite early in the war, Mends gained great credit for a dashing manoeuvre under sail outside Odessa, when, having got within range of the Mole batteries, he imitated Nelson in disregarding for a few moments the signal for recall. His organising ability was put to good use in the conception and planning out of the transport and disembarkation of the Crimean Expedition, which was really his work. Sir Edmund Lyons hated detail, and, indeed, could not grasp it; Mends had a passion for small particulars. Though aware of his chief's defects, Mends served under him loyally, and revered him for the fine sailor that he was. It was otherwise with Dundas, whom Mends criticises mercilessly, and who was indisputably too o'd for his responsibilities. We gather, in fact, from these pages the same moral that Lord Roberts draws in his opening chapters on the Indian Mutiny: the danger of continuing to employ veterans who have passed their prime. He gives a striking picture of Dundas's indecision before the naval attack on Sebastopol; at the eleventh hour he had almost made up his mind "not to risk his ships against stone walls." Mends's comment on the land operations lies open to the objection, of course, that here we have a sailor sitting in judgment on a rival profession, but the objection does not amount to much. His censure is that of patriotic common-sense; wanted a master-mind, wanted somebody in high places with the gift of foresight. Why did the siege operations lag so unaccountably at the outset, even if Sebastopol could not

have been taken by assault? Why were the French troops huddled against the winter's snows, whereas our men shivered under canvas? "Perfect as an English nobleman and gentleman, but no general," was Mend's view of Lord Raglan when he died. It is not Kinglake's, but then "The Invasion of the Crimea" is argued from a brief. The friendships cemented between French and English officers by the hardships of the Russian winter, together with Frenchmen's inability to comprehend the English character and English institutions, are delightfully illustrated in Mr. Mend's pages by two of the most noted sailors who served under the Emperor's flag. "Mend," cried Admiral Bruat, after the Agamemnon had brilliantly acquitted herself before Sebastopol, "if you were not married, I would give you my daughter." Later on, Admiral Jurien solemnly warned his old comrade in arms against the folly of putting rifles into the hands of the volunteers. "Picture to yourself what a rising of the Chartist would be, armed with Enfields!"

Lord Roberts's introduction to Mr. Spencer Wilkinson's "From Cromwell to Wellington: Twelve Soldiers" (Lawrence and Bullen), supplies just the right kind of connecting link to a set of biographies written by different hands. He considers that the dozen lives establish three truths: (1) The vast importance of sea-power as an influence on our military history; (2) the need of a ready and efficient Army to give the full advantage to naval superiority; (3) the identity between military talent and brains, or, as he puts it, the qualities that distinguish a successful general are those that would lead to advancement in any other walk of life. Of the various sketches, that of the Great Protector is, perhaps, the most pertinent to the moment, since a Cromwellian centenary is upon us. Written in the best style of that sound military commentator, the late Colonel Cooper King, it lays due stress upon Cromwell's supreme gift—the capacity to turn to account an unexpected development in a military situation. Mr. J. W. Fortescue's "Marlborough" is a more brilliant piece of work, but also a good deal more controversial. Lord Roberts takes him to task for being a little too severe on the French predilection for fortified lines and towns. But it is unnecessary to criticise these excellent monographs one by one; enough that the history of a siege could not be better told than by Colonel Adye in his stirring account of Eliott's defence of Gibraltar, of a campaign than by Major Mayne in his masterly summary of Sir John Moore's retreat. Mr. Spencer Wilkinson was inspired by the happy idea of luring his fellow-countrymen, by means of biography, into a study of the British Army in the field during a century and a-half, and they ought to jump at the bait. Some of the studies may be a trifle tame; that of Clive, by Colonel Adam and himself, will not stand comparison with Sir Alexander Arbuthnot's admirable little book. But it is much more informative, and, it is hardly necessary to add, far more accurate than Macaulay. The least satisfactory of these little biographies arranges one's ideas; the best entirely reconstruct them, and that is high praise.

Mr. John Garrett Leigh has bestowed on his novel the somewhat mystifying title of "God's Greeting" (Smith and Elder), from the name of a field to which his mining hero repairs for the study of the classics and the preparation of his socialistic speeches. The story is rather reminiscent in places of "Felix Holt," in others it remotely suggests Mrs. Gaskell's "Mary Barton." Dick Bradley bears, indeed, a close political relationship to George Eliot's Radical agitator, and there are these further resemblances in their fates, that they are both tried for a crime that they have not committed, and both marry a girl of higher station than themselves, who has become a convert to their views. Mr. Leigh, too, is like Mrs. Gaskell in his thorough knowledge of the Lancashire operators' ways of thought, while he can claim a more thorough acquaintance with their work than a lady could be expected to acquire. Some of the most striking scenes in "God's Greeting"—and the book has many such—are placed in the pits, and they will surprise a good many people who regard Lancashire miners as an uncalculating, unreasonable class, who never know when they are well off. Mr. Leigh brings out the strong vein of religious sentiment that runs through their rugged natures, their chivalrous sense of comradeship, and their by no means undignified courtships. Little Emma Banks is a most charming figure of an industrial saint, worthy of the greatest of our living novelists. "God's Greeting" is, unfortunately, rather overlaid with "purpose"; nor does Mr. Leigh always succeed in holding the balance evenly between capital and labour. Mill-owners do not rate their hands in public nowadays; they dare not, for one thing, and it would not pay, for another. Some of the closing episodes, too, are unnecessarily violent, particularly the insane jealousy of Dick Bradley's sweetheart, Julia, which drives her to arson and murder. Still, Mr. Leigh has written a thoughtful, powerful novel, and one would like to hear from him again.

The writer confesses to have read Mrs. L. T. Meade and Mr. Robert Eustace's "The Brotherhood of the Seven Kings" (Ward, Lock, and Co.), at a stretch, until past two o'clock in the morning, and then to have jumped like a kangaroo because the wind stirred the window-blind. If these are not conclusive tests of a novel of many sensations, what are? Madame Koluchy is the most complete she-villain that recent fiction has produced, capable of killing a Derby favourite with a tsetse fly, of poisoning, microbing, and criminal science alone knows what besides. What is more, Mr. Norman Head and his friend, Du'ray, tackle her with resolution and resource, though they make one unaccountable mistake when they let an "old crone with dark and piercing eyes" slip through their fingers. "Madame Koluchy for a million!" says the experienced novel-reader to himself, and he is right first time. As for possibility or probability—but why worry about such dull considerations as those?



GARDENS OLD AND NEW.

WE often hear from readers of COUNTRY LIFE that the illustrations in our series "Gardens Old and New" are quite a revelation of unknown beauties to them; and while the Editor has a long list of such gardens which he has permission to photograph, he would appreciate suggestions for any others of which his correspondents have personal knowledge.

It would be of assistance in making a selection if, in sending lists, rough photographs of the gardens from various points of view could be sent. Also the Editor particularly wishes to say that lavish expenditure is by no means necessary in the creation of gardens of the kind he loves to illustrate.

THE ARUM LILY, OR LILY OF THE NILE.

Notwithstanding rivals, the Arum Lily, or Lily of the Nile, *Richardia aethiopica*, still remains one of the noblest flowers of the greenhouse. "Flower" the *Richardia* may be called, but the true flower is insignificant; it is the beautiful ivory-coloured spathe that constitutes the great attraction of the plant, in combination with bold glossy green foliage. In very mild climates, as in the Scilly Isles, Cornwall, and on the South Coast of Ireland, the Arum Lily grows freely in open-air ponds and by lakesides. Illustrations revealing its wonderful freedom and beauty thus growing have been given in COUNTRY LIFE, and those situated in genial climates should naturalise the plant in this way. It adds a distinct charm to the water garden, and the spathes provide material for indoor decorations, especially for churches, or



F. Mason Good.

ARUM LILIES.

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anything demanding large effects. Where Arum Lilies are grown in quantity they are planted out in the summer and lifted in the ensuing September, but this plan can only be followed in large domains. They may be kept in pots throughout the year, giving rich soil, and when growth is beginning an abundance of water, remembering that in its native country the Arum seeks the moisture of ditch and stream. When the spathes are desired at Christmas, place the plants in heat six weeks before, and if very large specimens are wanted, those that will send up a forest of spathes, pot on the clumps annually until they fill pots 15in. across. The Arum is easily grown, and its beautiful white spathes are so decorative that one can hardly see too much of them. Little Gem is a small edition of it, the spathes less than half the size of those of the type, and useful, therefore, for bouquets and small arrangements of flowers.

SUB-TROPICAL GARDENING.

At this season preparations for the summer garden occupy one's thoughts, and one phase of summer gardening should receive consideration in all places where it is possible to plant free groups, conspicuous more for beauty of leaf than beauty of flower. Sub-tropical gardening is a relief to flat bedding, brilliant masses of colour as interesting as the garishness of a cheap carpet, and entailing endless labour to maintain in condition, that is, to conform to the pattern of some inanimate or animate object. Leafy groups break up hard lines and soften oppressive colouring. Simple beds where such plants as the Castor-oil (*Ricinus*) and Indian Shot (*Canna*) are massed, with an edging of the grey-leaved Plantain Lily (*Funkia Sieboldi*), or wide borders where the lofty shafts of Bamboo and Arundo and the tall flower spikes of the Plume Poppy (*Bocconia cordata*) stand out from the curving leaves of the noble *Acanthus*, the sword-like foliage and ivory bloom spikes of the Yuccas, the narrow, drooping leafage and brilliant flower-heads of the *Tritomas*, or *Kniphofias*, as they are now called, and the varied outlines of *Crambe*, *Epimedium*, and *Solanum*, are effective examples of beauty of form. An ideal spot for a sub-tropical garden is a dell sheltered by surrounding trees, which screen the big Palm leaves and *Musa* (Banana) from high winds. But, of course, it is not every garden, however large, that possesses such a place as this, and if there were a sheltered dell in the garden, some would rather utilise it for a Bamboo colony than plant it with the tender sub-tropical things for the summer only. No matter, however, where the sub-tropical garden may be placed, by itself, or in border or bed, it is necessary that the soil be both very rich and deep. A poor hungry staple will not support luxuriant leafage and make noble plants, for these strong-growing things drain

the soil quickly of nutriment. English summers are short and often unpleasantly chilly, so that everything should be done to promote vigorous growth. Although it is true that subjects requiring glass shelter during the winter, and those that must be raised from seed in heat and planted out in the early summer, are indispensable to any sub-tropical garden, fine effects may be obtained from

HARDY PLANTS,

or at least those comparatively hardy. This is a strong point to remember. Many hardy perennials possess noble foliage, and one may instance the *Acanthus mollis* in illustration, which has giant, glossy green, arching leaves, accompanied perhaps by flower spikes 6ft. high, and the dwarf, prickly-leaved *A. spinosissimus*. The following list of hardy or nearly hardy sub-tropical plants will no doubt be helpful at this season. Besides the plants already mentioned include:

- Aralia japonica* and *A. spinosa*.—The first is also called *Fatsia japonica*, and is a well-known plant, with white plummy flowers. *A. spinosa* is very effective, having an erect stem nearly 10ft. high, whence it spreads aloft its large, deeply-cut leaves and white flower plumes. Both plants are hardy in the South-west of England and in the South of Ireland.
- Ailanthus glandulosa*.—The Tree of Heaven, with beautiful foliage. Cut down each year, then strong shoots are thrown up. Quite hardy.
- Rhus typhina*.—This is the Stag's-horn Sumach, with noble foliage, brightly coloured in autumn. Treat the same as the Tree of Heaven. Quite hardy.
- Pawlonia imperialis*.—The broad leaves of this plant are very handsome. Cut down the plant hard each year.
- American Aloe (*Agave americana*).
- Arundo Donax* (Giant Reed) and its more tender variegated variety.
- Arundo conspicua*.
- Arundinarias.—A group of Bamboos. *Bambusa* or true Bamboos.
- White Plume Poppy (*Bocconia cordata*).—A beautiful hardy plant, with greyish leaves and ivory flower spike. A free group of this is delightful throughout the summer, and the roots cost little.
- Crambe cordifolia*.
- Maples, Japanese.—These are for the most part dwarf shrubs, with wonderfully-coloured foliage. Although natives of Japan, they are quite hardy everywhere. Even in severe winters they are seldom injured.
- Eulalia japonica* and its variegated variety.—Graceful grasses, only hardy in the South.
- Plantain Lilies (*Funkias*).—These are well-known hardy perennials. The best for our purpose are *F. Sieboldi*, with its blue-green leaves, *F. ovata*, and the fragrant-flowered *F. grandiflora*.
- Ferulas*, *Gunnera manicata* and *G. scabra*.—These have enormous leaves, and are seen to best advantage grouped by the water's edge. They can, however, be grown well even in dry soil, but must never be crowded up with other things.
- Pampas Grass (*Gynerium*).
- Fan Palm (*Chamærops Fortunei*).—This is fairly hardy in the South of England, where it has been grown to a height of 14ft. in some instances.
- Kniphofias* (Flame-flowers).
- New Zealand Flaxes, *Phormium tenax* and *P. t. variegata*.—Vigorous, handsome plants in the South of England.
- Polygonum cuspidatum* and *P. sachalinense*.—These must be used with caution, lest their too vigorous growth overrun other plants. Isolated positions are best, then their graceful form is evident.
- Yuccas*, such as *Y. gloriosa*, *flaccida*, *filamentosa*, and *pendula*.

EXOTIC SUB-TROPICAL PLANTS.

- Acacia lophantha*. *Cannas* in rich variety. *Hedychium*, or Garland-flower. Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus*), especially the glaucous *E. globulus*, so readily raised from seed in heat.
- Ficus elastica*, the India-rubber plant. *Grevillea robusta*.
- Melanthus major*, which has much-cut glaucous leaves.
- Musa Ensete*, which, if planted out permanently, must have glass shelter in winter.
- Palms, such as *Latania borbonica*, *Seaforthia elegans*, *Phoenix canariensis*, and *Kentia Fosteriana*.
- Tree Ferns. *Datura suaveolens*, a fragrant ivory-flowered exotic.
- Abutilium vitifolium album*. *Ricinus* (Castor-oil plant).
- Cannabis* (Giant Hemp). *Tobaccos*, such as *Nicotiana wigandioides*.
- Solanums*, as *S. robustum* and *marginatum*.
- Maize and its variegated variety.

FURTHER NOTES CONCERNING SUB-TROPICAL PLANTS.

Into the sub-tropical garden, or to associate with other things, bring groups of sub-tropical plants, *Fuchsias*, *Cape Leadwort* (*Plumbago capensis*), the Coral Tree (*Erythrina*), and even the *Galtonia*, a bulb which bears a tall spike with pendant snowdrop-like flowers in late summer. This may be grouped with sub-tropical plants to advantage. We like to see also the *Heliotrope*, *Agapanthus*, *Myrtle*, scented-leaved *Pelargonium*, and similar tender shrubby things in tubs upon the terrace or in pots plunged on the lawn outskirts. This, however, is rather outside true sub-tropical gardening. Where a stock of tender or hardy plants does not exist, of course seedlings or roots must be purchased. The hardy kinds enumerated may be bought at this season, and the tender kinds will want protection until all fear of frost is over. Rich soil, shelter if possible, and plenty of water during the summer months are essential. Many kinds may be grown permanently in pots, which should be plunged in the position desired, and lifted again in autumn, giving them the necessary warmth to ensure perfect restoration to health after, possibly, a cold, stormy season.

THE DOUBLE BLACKTHORN.

The Blackthorn is *Prunus spinosa*, and the double variety known in books as *P. spinosa fl.-pl.* is even more beautiful than the single kind, which makes drifts of white in the hedgerow early in the year. Storms of wind and rain and early frosts are not so harmful to the double as to the single flowers, the little rosettes hiding the brown twigs beneath a snowy covering. Unfortunately this shrub seems far from common in English gardens, but it is worth planting in groups. It does not grow quickly, and when established must not be disturbed, but it seldom fails to flower freely, given reasonable attention.

FLOWERING TREES AND SHRUBS.

The well-planted garden is full now of flowering trees and shrubs, and without the beautiful flower-laden branches many places would lose their chief charm. There is no excuse nowadays for dingy gardens in the full springtime of the year. Shrubs that blossom at this season are generally reasonable in price, so much so that groups of each may be planted without incurring a serious outlay. It is a thousand times better to group a few things than to obtain a mere collection, as if it were desired to cram everything into the garden that has been sent to us from other lands. A muddled shrubbery is a sorry place. It is sad to see beautiful flowering shrubs, *Guelder Roses*, *Flowering Currants*, *Weigelas*, and a host of other things, striving for liberty and to reveal their characteristic charm. This is of course impossible unless every shrub is permitted to develop in its own way. Flowering shrubs are not happily placed when used as a screen. A good Yew or other hedge is better, leaving other kinds for the pleasure grounds or even near the house, where one can appreciate their beauty of form, leaf, or flower.

Ploughing in the Coal Measures.

IN the Scotch coal measures, as in many similar areas in England, agriculture goes on steadily on the surface and up to the edge of the pit heaps, while 1,000ft. below other men and boys and pit-ponies are working down in the darkness of the mine. The soil above is often of excellent quality, and one often sees first-class crops of wheat or heavy layers of clover, over which the colliery chimneys are pouring clouds of smoke. In time, when the coal is worked out, the supports of the old workings rot, and the land subsides. In the hollow so formed water accumulates, and lakes, large and small, appear. The scene here shown is by the margin of one of these chance-formed sheets of water. It is a perfectly still evening in early March, and while the ploughman with his fine yoke of Clydesdale horses is ploughing up the land, preparatory to getting it ready for barley sowing, the children have come back from school, and are sailing a boat on their pond. So still is the water, that, if the picture is reversed, all the scene will be found to be exactly mirrored

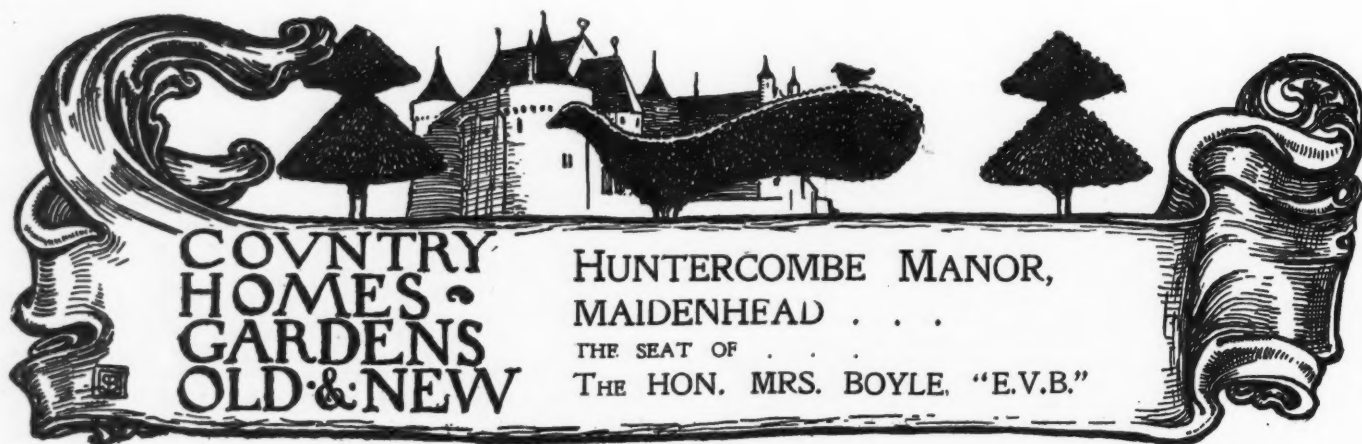


C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

A SCENE OF QUIET INDUSTRY.

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on its surface without a break. There are, in fact, two pictures, and either is good enough to make a representation of this SCENE OF QUIET INDUSTRY.



IN the peaceful Thames Valley, by Taplow, is Huntercombe Manor. The house must possess a fascinating history, though there are, unfortunately, few records of its past. We know that the ancient priory of Burnham was established here, the present manor being a few yards distant from the

ruined Abbey. But when the monasteries were ruthlessly destroyed, Burnham Abbey was molested too. It was left to moulder to decay. The nuns of the Benedictine convent no longer walked in the grateful shade of the garden, and the Angelus ceased to disturb the solemn silence. A traceried window, part of the nave, and fishpond are amongst the relics of its former glory.

It is interesting to know that the Abbey was founded by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, King of the Romans in 1265, and the house formed part of the convent. When it was robbed and its nuns scattered, this beautiful place fell upon evil days. Years sped away, and ivy caressed the crumbling walls, until Huntercombe again became of some note from its association with George Evelyn, cousin to the great John Evelyn, prince of gardeners, who loved with no ordinary love the trees and shrubs and flowers of the garden. We know that Evelyn visited here, and was, perhaps, concerned in the part reconstruction of the house, with its noble Elizabethan staircase, near which the Evelyn arms with the griffin stand out in high relief. The manor is a rambling house, added to on more than one occasion, as one may readily discern. "E. V. B.," the *nom-de-plume* which Mrs. Boyle assumes in her charming books, has made substantial additions, whilst preserving its old-world aspect. Verrio and his pupils painted many of the stucco ceilings when decorating the interior of Windsor Castle, a few miles distant. All this interesting work is preserved, with many relics of the Abbey and its convent.

The manor has the history of many a beautiful ancient English home. When the Evelyn family ceased to possess it, the house was let as a farm, happily to again recover its former interest and beauty when "E. V. B." came to it about thirty years ago. No garden surrounded the ancient place, though toadflax and snapdragon clung to the thick red-bricked convent wall, at one time thatched, and through which, tradition says, there was a passage.

We are, however, on this occasion more concerned with the garden than the house,





"COUNTRY LIFE."

GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—HUNTERCOMBE MANOR: IN THE FLOWER GARDEN.

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though one is loth to leave the oaken rooms, with peeps of the garden through the latticed windows. Flowers are loved in this place for their own sake. "E. V. B.'s" many charming books tell one this, the pages of "Ros Rosarum," "The Garden of Pleasure," and "Days and Hours in a Garden" revealing a deep reverence for flower and tree life. There was no garden thirty years ago. Meadows crept up to the old walls, and no lavender was there to sweeten the air, or rose to stray into the oaken porch. How different is the manor in the present day. True, the great beech forest of Burnham no longer fringes the estate, and the traffic of the highway to Bath is heard in the sheltered grounds; but gardening is practised as may be it was in the time of old, when the gardeners were the nuns of the convent.



Hills and Saunders.

TIMEKEEPERS ANCIENT AND MODERN.

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rally grow with greater rapidity than holly—at least, such is the case here. The hedges quickly grew as tall as they were intended to be, and are to-day vigorous and dense, their sombre leafage deepening the flower colour spread lavishly over the face of the garden. It is a garden almost of courts, full of quaint corners and turnings, each a study of colour as the seasons pass away, revealing fresh pictures to tell the story of the year. We

Huntercombe is a pleasant place at all seasons, from the opening of the year, with its Christmas roses and the first snow-drop, until the last starwort has faded in the early winter. When Mrs. Boyle came, a perplexing problem had to be solved—how to treat a garden as flat as the surrounding meadows. She conceived the happy notion of planting yew hedges, which, with good soil and careful treatment, generally



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YEW HEDGES AND LAWNS.

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THE OLD GATEWAY.

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CONE-SHAPED YEWS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

visited Huntercombe when the clouds of snowdrops, whitening the ground like a snow shower, had vanished, ushering in the fluttering colonies of daffodils grouped by the drive, some quiet walk, or upon the lawns—wherever, indeed, their presence beautified the surroundings, all set out without a desire to create any pattern or formal effect. In "Nut Close," between beech and yew hedges, crocuses were massed in distinct colours. Carpets of white, purple, yellow, and other shades, softened by the verdure of hedge and grass, blazed in the April

sun. A crocus garden in the middle of a sunny day is something to remember, and this lesson may be learned from their use, that is, if one wishes for bright gardens in early spring, crocuses should be planted freely, not merely by some border edge, but in the grass, as if splashes of colour had fallen upon the turf from the sky above. The breath of violets in crocus and daffodil time pervades the garden. The air is drenched with the perfume, distilled from a thousand flowers peeping above the trailing growths. In "The Garden of Pleasure," a

diary, so to say, of the year in this garden, violets are written of more than once. "Very little flowers" they are, "but somehow there's much to say about them! Under a sunny hedgerow of the Walk Meadow, blue and white violets grow together, with a third kind in which the blue seems to run into the white—white violets dashed with blue or lilac. And two or three years ago, under another quick-set hedge in our lane, I scattered some seeds of purple violets for the delight of our village children, or for any little wayfarers in the spring. The seeds did not seem to come up, and I forgot all about them till the other day, when we saw, with great satisfaction, a little boy and his big brother happily engaged gathering dark sweet violets under the barren hedge, and making them up into posies with a few scant early daisies."

Changes are ever occurring, either in alterations in the garden or in adding fresh flower pictures. This is as it should



THE BROAD WALK.

be. The true gardener is ever watchful to try some plant hitherto absent, to achieve fresh successes or to experience fresh failures. A big group of Delphinium Belladonna has been planted to get its soft blue flowers against dark yew, and in the broad walk groups of white lilies are between glowing Oriental poppies, whilst a forest of spires floods the iris garden with colour and fragrance in May and June. Glimpses of this beautiful colouring are seen through some court, for nothing is lost. Everything is planted with an object, not shut in as if a tender exotic harmed by the weather pranks of the English climate. We read in "The Garden of Pleasure" that "Our irises begin to know they are especial favourites here, and their great size and luxuriance is bewildering. Of course 'they' would tell me it is only because their roots have 'become established.' . . . It is strange that *Iris germanica*, whose scent I have sometimes known at Rome (and notably where it grows round the tomb of *Cæcilia Metella*) to make the sweet air still more delicious, has here no kind of scent."

But, truth to say, it is hopeless to tell of all the flowers that have been planted. The broad borders are filled with the precious perennials that bloom in their appointed seasons. Pæonies are sending their crimson shoots through the brown earth, and everything on the April day when we visited Huntercombe was bursting into life. One must not forget the rock garden, placed upon the outskirts of the pleasure grounds. This is full of charm in the spring. Scarlet windflowers make a glowing break of colour, and the violet-scented *Iris reticulata* loads the air with perfume, soon to be followed by colonies of the dwarf pumila race, whilst the starry blue flowers of the *chionodoxas* are seen with the scillas, as blue as the wood hyacinth in the copse.

Hardy flowers of all kinds are cherished, borders flanking a long central walk being filled with a host of kinds; nor are they confined to the border, but planted in beds, as later in the year one will know full well by peeping through an opening in the old wall skirting what was formerly the kitchen garden, now covered with flowers.

Pleasant, too, is a streamlet fringed with daffodils, irises, and flowers that seek moisture. An old wall is wreathed in roses and shrubby climbers, the Japanese quince (*Pyrus japonica*) having long reached the top, every branch burdened with scarlet flowers. How quaint and bright is this shrub! One never tires of its flowers, which venture out long before winter is over when the weather is mild.

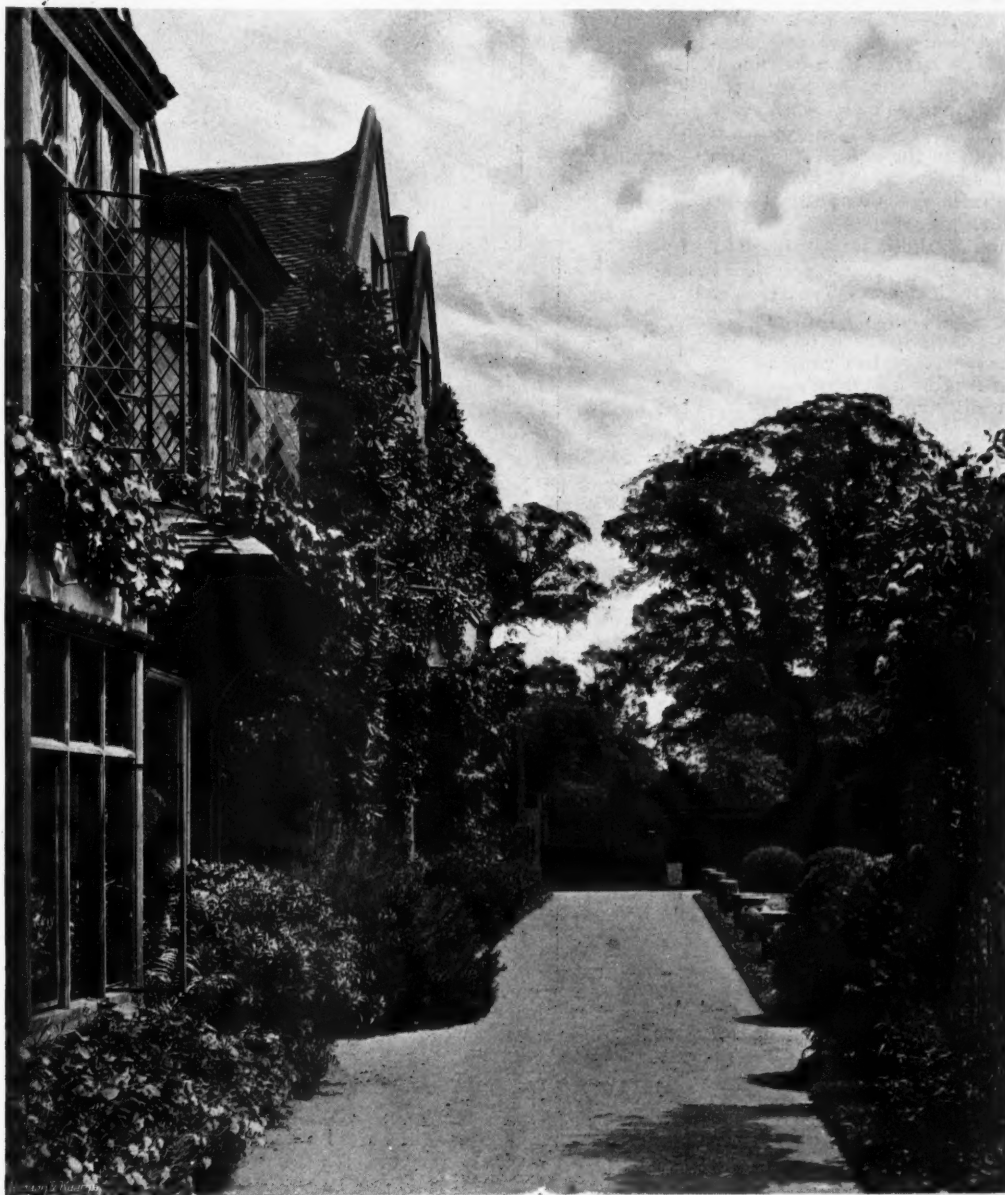
Tea roses have been planted unsparingly of late years, and no flower is fairer. It is tender in colour and beautiful in form, like some lovely shell when dewed over in the early morn. The writer has gathered buds in November to open out in the warm air of a room, and the flowers seem more fragrant and richer in colour in autumn than in summer. The plants, too, are hardier than many suppose, and in severe winters, if earthed up, that is soil drawn over the crowns, they will even spring up strongly, though perhaps cut to the ground-line by prolonged frosts. There is beauty also in the young crimson shoots coming out of the soil, and for this reason they are effective grouped with daffodils.

Wandering about the grounds, one notices many vigorous conifers, which deepen the flower colouring near them, a Douglas fir planted twenty-seven years ago having reached a height of 75ft.

Heaths are in many places. Near the house *Erica carnea* has been long in bloom, tufts of blossom, rich and

welcome in the late winter and early spring. The manor itself is covered with magnolia, wistaria—trails of lilac clusters in May—roses, and the tender shrubs that love, and indeed need, the warmth of a southern sheltered aspect. In a warm nook the camellia-flowered rose is growing fast, the *Choisya* makes a glossy green patch, and the narrow border is filled with rosemary, lavender, and the mezereon, purple with fragrant flowers, mingling their perfume with the odorous bushy herbs that, may be, were treasured in the convent garden of old.

Though we have written of the hardy flowers chiefly, Huntercombe is a garden of shrubs too. A late spring day is



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THE CREEPER-COVERED SOUTH FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the time to visit the old garden, when the aged Blenheim pippins upon the lawn are pink with flowers, and the *Pyruses*, *P. Malus floribunda*, *P. spectabilis*, and others, bend almost beneath their burden of blossom in "Peach Corner"; but we know not when the garden is most pleasant, for it is at all times interesting to the true gardener. Bright indeed was it upon that April day when the crocuses, daffodils, and blue scillas spread their colour lavishly over the rich grass, and the rooks were calling from the tall elms traced against the sky. Our wish that Huntercombe will long remain cared for by "E. V. B." will be re-echoed by all who love the flowers of the year planted in the happiest ways.

CLUMBERS.

THE modern fashion, in many ways so admirable, of beating and driving game to guns posted in front, has made the use of dogs less important than in olden days; but just now one may see signs of a disposition to return, in some measure, to the olden style. People are beginning to realise that our forefathers had a pleasure in seeing their dogs working for game that is denied to us on our more wholesale methods.

Especially has the use of spaniels gone out of fashion, except in some places that have their local peculiarities; but there is evidence that this fashion too will have its turn again. A deal depends on the nature of the covert. General Hutchinson, in his "Dog-breaking," has an illustration of the manner in which A WELL-BROKEN TEAM of Clumbers may be used—to range not wildly, nor widely, but to spread themselves out like an advanced line of skirmishers, before the guns, and so make good every yard of the covert as it is walked through. And this illustration is made the more interesting by an incident depicted, that would be incredible if the authority given for it were not unimpeachable. On the keeper's order a retriever has gone in, and lifted by the scruff of the neck one of the spaniels that has "run in" or committed one or other of the deadly sins, and so warned him not to offend again. Spaniels are so eager and high-spirited that they are hard to break perfectly, although they are very intelligent.

The Clumber is rather a heavy-looking, lumbering fellow, and A GROUP OF PUPPIES especially are like balls of canine fat, and roll about almost as if their legs were too soft to carry their big bodies; but they are wonderfully quick and active, for all that, when they grow to dog's estate. You learn their value particularly in thick covert; and this is a singular fact, for they are so solidly made that they do not look of the right shape to pierce through the tangle of brushwood. But the truth is that this very solidity and squareness is what helps them along. They carry a wonderful coat, so that the shrewdest



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A GROUP OF PUPPIES.

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thorn will not pierce it, and they get through the bushes not by any crawling and creeping but by sheer dash and weight. They will go fearlessly at the thickest furze bush, charging it as if it were an enemy to be borne down by mere weight of metal.

Therefore they are particularly useful in those thickly-wooded and under-wooded "dingles" and "bottoms" of Wales and the Western Counties of England, where the cunning cock pheasant will lie crouched down so close in such a quick-set bush that the pointer, even if he winds him, will prefer to think he has been there and gone rather than draw up to him through the *chevaux de frise*. And again, when this same cock pheasant is started, and is running (as he will run almost everlastingly before the slowly-working pointer), the bustling

Clumber will be on him unawares and make him take wing and give a chance to the gun in order to save himself from the dog's jaws. The rabbit that lies close in the furze bush will be driven from his lair. Nothing can escape the energy of the bustling little pack.

The trouble, as has been indicated, is to keep the bustle within bounds, under control. But when it has been accomplished, the result is worth all the trouble. The sight is so pretty, of the whole pack down charging together, working under one will, obeying a signal. Of the pack it is well that one, and one only, should retrieve, or else (it is a higher refinement of breaking) that any one, singled out by name, should retrieve while the others keep their places. If the whole pack be engaged in retrieving a single bird the tug-of-war may be interesting, but it will leave little of the bird for the cook.



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A WELL-BROKEN TEAM.

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THE LYNTON MAYING.

BEYOND the straw-roofed cottages at Lynton sounds of singing voices were heard hovering on the still evening air with undeniable sweetness. They were children's voices. Behind those homely tenements, with their doll's-house windows and shale steps to the door, there was a square green space—part paddock and part orchard—in which the small village folk were allowed by Farmer Todford, the owner, to assemble for play after school hours, and from there the musical notes were now ascending over the yellow thatch and red tiles.

It was the close of a day in May—to be precise, the 11th of the month—the eve of Old May Day. The sun had not yet retreated from the white road or the buff gravel pathway on the south side of it that led to the play-mead, for the hour was no more than half-past six o'clock; the scene, therefore, had a bright, warm, and cheering aspect, which was by no means lessened by the many colours of the children's frocks—looking, as seen from

the roadway, like a gay patchwork upon a green ground. Over the field itself the sunshine still lingered like a soft, golden veil, moving slowly westward, and leaving some of the children in the sun and some in the shade—two pictures of rustic prettiness, both having their special charms.

In the middle of the green, under a crooked codlin tree, whose branches, spreading out like wrinkled fingers to the four points of the compass, were covered with blossom as white as driven snow, were gathered the group of singing children, trying their May songs in readiness for the performance of the morrow. A bright-haired maiden of ten years, slightly bigger than the rest, with a large green felt hat—bought for her mother two years ago at a third-rate milliner's shop in gay Brookington—containing one solitary goose-quill by way of trimming, upon her head, and a pinafore slit all down the front over her frock, stood in the midst of them, holding up in her hands the yet unfinished object which was on the next day to be their maypole.

This, in its present form, consisted of a disused broomstick, about 5 ft. in length, at the top of which was tied with a piece of pink tape a wide-rimmed, stout wooden hoop, trimmed with flowers from the garden and the wayside, a bunch of buttercups being the companion to a nosegay of gillies, and a spray of hawthorn blossom the next-door neighbour to a set of gaudy daffodils. In the middle of the hoop a waxen doll, with very bright auburn hair and a lavender frock, hung suspended from the top of the hoop by a blue ribbon passing round her waist, like a fairy in the flies of a playhouse.

"It's not so pretty as it'll be to-morrow," said the maypole bearer, looking up at her burden with a critical eye, "when it's gotten the silken patchwork an' satin streamers to it as Loo Fennemoor's mother's goin' to give us. They're the silken an' satin bits o' patchwork bravery as Mrs. Fennemoor had on herself twenty years ago when she were chosen as Queen o' the May on this very green patch here. An'—an'—"

The girl bent a rosy, bright, and pleasing face down to her small friends gathered like chickens under her wing, whispered something very confidentially in their ears—at which most of the children laughed and clapped their hands—and then brought her pert face up to its erect position again with the air of one who had some very surprising scheme in contemplation.

"The waxen doll's what I had at the last Thomasin' but one; mother brought it for me from Ribbonbridge Sheep Fair, just afore Martinmas Day, an' kept it hid up for me till the night afore Thomasin', so as I should not so soon break it. I've ragged to crack the wax right across her brow, though—just where the yellow ribbon is as I've put over it. Now gels, one more go round, as sweet as you know how this time, 'cause Miss Cotter's in the school-house, an' she'll be pleased to hear us sing well."

"All right, Sis, we will—a treat," came the glad reply from one or two of the fluty throats in the group. "As sweet as we know how, lassie."

The small village folk under the wing of Sis—who appeared to be the Queen of the Ceremonies, if she was not going to be the Queen of the May—straightway made a flank movement, with a precision equal to that of the Brookington Volunteers when drilling in the Cricket Field, formed into single file, and marched round the maypole in Sis's hands with skipping feet, following the lead of Sis, whose fluty voice soared like a clarion above the rest, in singing the May song:

"'Tis always on the twelfth of May,
We meet and dress so gaily,
For to-night will mer-rie be,
For to-night will mer-rie be,
For to-night will mer-rie be,
We'll sing and dance so gaily.
"The sun is up and the morn is bright,
And the twelfth of May is our delight;
Then arouse thee, arouse
In the mer-rie sweet light,
Take the pail and the labour away.
"That dear little girl
Who lives in yon sky,
With the lilies and the roses
Shall never be forgot.
"Yonder stands a pretty lady,
Who she is we do not know,
Who she is we do not know;
We will take her for our beauty
Whether she answers yes or no,
Whether she answers yes or no."

"Now a good last verse, gels," cried Sis, with animation in her eyes and her cheeks more rosy than those of the waxen doll in the garlanded hoop above her head. "Miss Cotter's come out, look, to the school-house door, an' the people are comin', too, though I donna see Loo or Denny yet awhile."

In response to her appeal the girls continued merrily:

"Then shake the money-box about,
And call on every lady,
For to-night will mer-rie be,
For to-night will mer-rie be,
For to-night will mer-rie be,
We'll sing and dance so gaily."

While the singing children were piping their May songs like the thrushes that sing in the plum trees of their cottage gardens every morning, a little tinkling of bells was heard up the road some distance from the play-mead in an easterly direction. A child who had just shot out from the gap in a well-

trimmed hawthorn hedge that fenced in a row of four red-tiled cottages near the wayside pump, was at that moment seen skipping down the roadway with a small brass-enclosed bell tied at each end of her rope, which gave out the dulcet little tinklings as she skipped.

Notwithstanding the fact that the skipper was without her hat, and was evidently a native of the village, there was a townish air pervading her person from her head to her heel. She was modish even in her skipping, poising herself well on her toes, with a grace that might well have been the creation of a Brookington dancing-master, though, in reality, it was a native grace inherited from her mother.

Her hair was thick and dark, fluffy on her forehead, after the manner of the town, and hanging down behind her back nearly 2 ft. She wore a dainty little frock down to her knees, of the blue of the feathers of the peacock which was at that moment screaming from the red tiles of the Manor Farm, lying in the corner of the short northern lane. Over her frock she had a clean white pinafore edged with lace round the bib, round the sieve-holes, and round the hem at the bottom. Brown stockings and brown shoes completed the

little maid's attire, which on the whole showed her mother to have been a woman with strong inclinations towards the fashions of the town, and a knowledge of how to effectively set off the person.

The girl had a dolly-like beauty: a round plump face, clear skin, rosy cheeks and lips, and a pair of flashing brown eyes, which, young as she was—being at present only in her eighth year—had already drawn upon her the love both of the other sex and her own. With the aid of her clothes, which exactly harmonised with her beauty, she looked like a veritable little waxen woman, only that she had moods, action, grace, and life, and knew, moreover, how to use her gifts—a talent also inherited from her mother, who before her marriage had been one of the belles of the village.

She skipped on down the lane with a little tinkling trot that sounded very pretty in the evening air just at that point, where there was not one single soul but herself to be seen, and hardly a cry to be heard. When she had reached the fence which bounds the sand quarry on the north side of the roadway, she halted for a moment, and began to skip standing, repeating the while a quaint jingle common with the children in country places in that neighbourhood:

"Black currant,
Red currant,
Strawberry jam,
Tel me the name of my young man,
A, B, C, D—"

The rope caught under her foot at "D," whether by accident or design was not clear, though it appeared to be by design, for she went through the jingle



J. W. Dick.

THE QUEEN OF THE MAY.

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three times, and each time stopped at the "D"—as if she were trying a part which she would shortly have to play.

Having completed the performance to her own satisfaction, the girl went skipping and tinkling down the road until she came to the opening to the play-mead, a good view of which could be obtained from where she stood. In a moment her appearance was noted by the singing children, who set up a cry of "Here's Loo, here's Loo," and with their faces all turned towards her, once more, in pealing tones, as if in ratification of a previous resolve, went through the fourth verse of their May song, altering the words so as to suit their present needs:

"Yonder stands a pretty lady,
Who she is we all do know,
Who she is we all do know;
We will take her for our beauty,
Whether she answers yes or no,
Whether she answers yes or no."

"Come, Loo, lassie—come, Loo," called Sis, in a fever of delight, gaily waving the maypole aloft, to the imminent danger of the waxen doll so gingerly suspended by the blue ribbon in the middle of the hoop. "We've picked ye for our Queen, so come an' skip for your King."

With a pert shake of her black hair, and a rush of deeper red to her cheeks—through the consciousness that all eyes then in the play-mead were upon her—Loo skipped up the playground pathway, and into the midst of the singing children, to the accompaniment of her jingling bells.

"Tis very good of you, Sis, an' all of you, to choose me for your Queen," she said, with charming simplicity.

"Not at all, Loo; you're a real little Queen," said Sis, kissing her, and the others generously echoed the sentiment.

In truth, she was. Her natural charms, her sweetness of tongue, her dainty dress, her inborn grace of movement, and her modish ways, all contrasted so vividly with the sameness of the other children—cast as they every one seemed to be in exactly the same mould—that Loo stood out from among them as a being born with them, inseparable from them, and taking delight in their pleasures, and yet standing apart from them in the degree of a garden rose to the bloom of a dog-brier.

"Now skip for your King, Loo," said the Queen of the Ceremonies again; "Denny's up the apple tree yon, I see."

"Den-ny, Den-ny, I'm going to skip for King," cooed Loo, flashing a look towards an apple tree slightly to the west of the one under which the singing children were assembled; "inna ye coming, Den-ny?"

No further invitation was needed than the call of that fluty voice. In an instant a sturdy-limbed little boy of eight, in knickers and Lynton slop, with a face the colour of a rose, and short curly hair as bright-hued as early buttercups, came slithering down the gnarled trunk of the apple tree, and with the air of one who had often stood for the ceremony before, and knew quite well what was going to happen to-day, placed himself with a smile in front of Loo, who immediately began skipping and repeating the formula she had already rehearsed up the lane:

"Black currant,
Red currant,
Strawberry jam,
Tell me the name of my young man,
A, B, C, D—"

A burst of laughter and applause rang round the play-mead as the rope again caught under her foot at "D," and everybody was pleased, notwithstanding that the performance was simply a design completed. Denny was her King as well as her young man, and as she put her ruby lips to his and kissed him after the manner of the custom, the older hands on the ground said: "They two be made for one another in real life as well as in the Lynton Maying."

GEORGE MORLEY.

CHRONICLES OF . . A ROOKERY.

IT was on February 16th that the rooks this year first loitered for any length of time among their old nests in the Priory trees. These, by the way, are not all elms, the tree with which the rook in prose and verse is almost proverbially associated, for out of twenty-five nests sixteen are distributed among beeches, Spanish chestnuts, and Scotch firs, although fine old elms are at the service of "the black republicans." The original founders of the colony, a vagabond belated pair that came to the grove on April 3rd, Bank Holiday-making, four years ago, chose a weedy, long-drawn young beech for their wicker domicile, and, each year since, the exact site of that first nest has been tenanted, and two other nests have now been built as close to it as neighbourly proprieties allow. But the old "immemorial" elms are still in disfavour. Perhaps they have a bad reputation. For the first nest built in one of them was deserted in consequence of the male bird being shot when out foraging for his wife, and the first in another was blown out when half finished by an equinoctial squall in "the roaring moon of daffodils." And so, perhaps, the rooks take up their abodes in sympathy with antecedents, considering close-grown weedy trees of the coppice more auspicious than the free-standing elms of venerable appearance but of ill-omened traditions.

I have read in many places—the statement perhaps being taken over by one writer from another with that amiable confidence which is so characteristic of the word-spinner about Nature—that rooks will not allow one of their number to build apart from the colony, and that they punish such exhibitions of individual independence by destroying nests so built. Now as it happens, in the rookery of which I write three pairs of birds

have built in isolated trees rooyds. or more from the main colony, and though two out of the three are this year deserted, all are in excellent preservation, and young ones were hatched from all three last year. It is possible of course that, this rookery being one of only four years' standing, the tenants are glad to have the area of their colony extended, even at the expense of appearances, and so have acquiesced on public grounds



R. B. Lodge.

BUILDING THEIR NEST.

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in vagaries which might not be countenanced by rookeries of more ancient tenure and more rigidly conservative principles. However, the fact remains that three pairs of rooks had the audacity to build their cottages beyond the bounds of their village, one in a tree that overhangs the stable-yard, and another in the fork of a young elm barely 30ft. from the ground. Needless to say, the wideawake sparrow is this year already at home, and in the bosom of a family, in both of them, which reminds me of another point upon which, from personal experience, I am at odds with other writers who assert, one after the other, that rooks are intolerant of the company of other birds, jackdaws and starlings excepted. As a matter of common-sense, it is not the rooks, but "the other birds," who do not care for the company, for the same reason that walking under a ladder has come to be called "unlucky," namely, that you run the risk of the painter or whitewasher up above dropping something on you.

Jackdaws and starlings build (as a rule) in holes or under cover, so that they have nothing to fear from overhead. They are therefore tolerant of rook-neighbours. But birds with open nests, like blackbirds and thrushes, could not possibly bring up a family respectably under a rookery; and, as is the case here, the undergrowths of privet, laurel, box, and arbutus beneath the rooks' trees are now deserted by such birds. But in the ivy growing on some of the trees, protected against annoyance by the eaves-like overlapping foliage, the chaffinch, flycatcher, and greenfinch have all had their homes. A wren, with its domed nest, occupied a privet under the very centre of the rookery, and a spotted woodpecker, the lesser of that ilk—another bird with a protected nest—built in an acacia, also within the rooks' precincts. Moreover, a house sparrow has built—no uncommon occurrence—and is rearing its young, under a rook's nest, using its big neighbour's floor as its roof; while, finally, wood-pigeons have every year roosted without molestation in one of the fir trees occupied by rooks; but it is impossible, looking up into the mass of sticks that fill the shaving-brush top of the fir, to tell exactly whether the cushats have a nest there. This particular piece of shrubbery used, from there being no path through it, to be a favourite haunt of blackcap and bullfinch, and I am sorry that they are gone; but their going must not be attributed to ill-nature on the part of the rooks. All that they did was to say, like the hedgehog in the fable that got into the other animal's nest, and was reproached for making things uncomfortable, "Let them go that cannot stay"; and, as the lesser birds could not stay, they went.

There was soft, mellow weather in February, and in the middle of the month the last year's tenants of the trees, with some of their offspring, it may be, or merely friends, came and made lengthy examination of the weather-beaten tenements and found matter for much ejaculatory discourse. Oddly enough, it seemed as if, from the tones of voice, one could tell the old birds from the new. At any rate, they seemed to be of two parties, the one assertive, laying down the law, and speaking of ancient facts, without expectation of contradiction from a younger generation. The others seemed to be rather supercilious, and, as one listener said, "to pooh-pooh the oldest inhabitant's stories." They stayed for over an hour, and then flew away—for ten days. An occasional party, it is true, would stop, look round, make what sounded like disparaging remarks about the site, and go off; and it was not until the 26th that the colony returned in force. This time it was to stay. Some took at once possession of the old nests; and in no instance, apparently, was there any dispute as to their claims. There was much noise, of course, and all through the morning occasional scuffles. By-and-bye, the whole colony went off in a body to the fields, returning about five, an hour before sunset, and once more the old birds asserted ownership by sitting upon their nests, while the younger wandered about in couples, as if looking for eligible sites, clambering up and down like parrots with beak and claw, and full of animated conversation. All birds passing overhead were hailed by the elders, and it was very interesting to hear the almost human tones in which greetings were exchanged. Indeed, the voice of the rook is curiously translatable, the only other "inarticulate" bird-tongue that I can think of that at all approaches it in this respect being "the tame villatic fowl." Poultry make their remarks when at their ease in oddly-appropriate tones; children understand their speech, and say that they are "talking." So with the rooks; but of this later.

On the 27th of February nest repairing was in full swing. No new ones were begun, as the number of the old nests was equal to the demand, and the consequence was that the diminished rookery settled down to housekeeping with hardly



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NEST COMPLETE AND FINISHED.

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any of the usual preliminary fuss over stick-stealing and squabbling about places that precedes the egg-laying. On the 6th of March the colony had all the orderly appearance and outward signs of a settlement of setting hens. Now and again a bird would leave her nest and fly down into the paddock for an extra pinch of muddy turf or another beakful of dead leaves to patch up a chink or give a finishing touch; but the rule was long intervals of silent dozing on nests, broken by periodical outbreaks of clamour on the part of this wife or of that on despoiling her spouse returning with provisions, to be followed by the gobbling and choking that always accompany the transfer of food from the male to his mate. Then came a spell of fierce Arctic weather, boisterous squalls from the north-west laden with hail, and a hard frost, and the rooks had a woful time. The male birds sometimes could not make their nests in the teeth of the storm, and it was beautiful work to see how they came scudding down on the wind at the pace of falcons stooping, and, fetching up under the lee of the grove, shot upwards through the boughs to the silent mothers, cowering low in their nests under the blinding, deafening bombardment of sleet and hail. But the sun came back again; the daffodils straightened themselves up to look him full in the face, the tulips flung back their scarlet petals wide to let his warmth pierce their frozen hearts, and the rooks climbed up on to the topmost boughs and basked there, stretching their cramped wings out to the full.

So March passed. Then came mild showers of April rain, and mellow breaks of April sunshine; a week of uneventful days followed one another in happy, placid monotony. Hardly a week, though, for on April 5th there was heard in the dark head of a Scotch fir the cheeping cry of the nestlings taking their food from their mother. The new generation had come, the birds of 1899, and up in the tops of the trees, where the wind swings the cradles for the mothers, the old, old story that never grows tiresome is being retold anew. And how delightful a touch it is in the earlier nursery life of the little rooks that they keep all their welcomes for their mother only. Of the father they know nothing more than that his voice is very gruff, and that he stays very little at home. It is from their mother that they



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.E.

IN THE TREE-TOP.

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get at first all their food. That she in her turn gets it from the father they do not guess and do not care. All they understand is that he seems very grumpy and gives them nothing. So they treat him with deferential silence; but for the mother's every coming there is a chorus of glad little voices.

PHIL ROBINSON.

(To be continued.)



BY the time these notes appear we shall be knowing something about the destination of what certainly used to be considered the principal spring prize for amateur golf—the spring medal of the Royal and Ancient Club. Times have changed. The institution of the amateur championship and the fashion of holding that competition in the springtime have made the spring the great golfing season of the year. In days of o'd the autumn was the principal golfing season. It was then that we used to play in, or look on at, the open championship; but that greatest event of all is now decided, like all the rest, in the spring. The change is good; it is even necessary. With the multitudes of golfers that now enter for every competition of note it is necessary that the day should be long, and days long enough for the day's work are to be found with difficulty in the spring, but certainly not in the autumn. We remember many a man sadly finishing his championship rounds in the dark, and on one great occasion that we can call to mind there was some talk of sending out a search-party with lanterns to seek for some laggard pair of Scotsmen who were supposed to have gone astray and lost themselves in the unfamiliar and vast bunkers of Sandwich. That, no doubt, was in the nature of pleasantry, but it was pleasantry that had some point. Even now, in the months of May and June, it is possible to be benighted in the championship play, but not likely.

And if this spring meeting at St. Andrews is bereft of some little of its ancient glory, it remains the most pleasant meeting of the year. There is not that terrible congestion that compels us to wait indefinitely long over our strokes at the crowded autumn meeting, and often makes those strokes, when played, such as we could wish to have been played differently. There is not the crowd of all and sundry. It is a little crowd of people who know each other well, keen golfers all.

They were rather unlucky in having such windy weather at Eastbourne for the big tournament there. It is a peculiar course, part of it circling round right under the shelter of the great Southdown ridge that runs out to form Beachy Head. It is a course that in its higher parts is very much exposed to the wind; but the most curious and most baffling effect of the wind is to be seen in these corries and recesses among the big downs. We all know the way a stalker throws up a tuft of grass to see how the wind goes in the gorge that he is using to conceal him from the deer. One needs to take something like the same precautions to be sure that one is calculating the direction of the wind right among these angles of the Southdowns. Sometimes the wind comes racing in your face while the clouds above are racing no less hard from behind your back. The ball has to go up out of the one current into the other, and then you see it meet with all kinds of unexpected influences. All this preamble is by way of explanation of the fact that none of the professionals, on a course so undeniably short as Eastbourne, returned a lower score than they did. Seventy-four, it we

remember aright, was the best single round. The champion was not quite at his best early in the play—he had been indisposed since the big foursome at Richmond earlier in the week; a foursome that had an international character, for Vardon and Taylor were partners against Herd and Braid. But the champion was himself again before the end of the tournament. He and his fellow-Englishman just beat the Scotsmen in the foursome; but what a grand match it was! All even and one to play, after thirty-five holes played. The Eastbourne tournament failed to achieve one of its objects—that of bringing together the younger golfing talent and the more established reputations. All the former were knocked out in the preliminary scoring contest. It was a singular triumph of the veterans—quite bloodless; and the result most glorious for Braid, who treated Vardon to his first defeat this year.

FROM THE PAVILION.

THE cricket season of 1899 has been opened in a brilliant manner by a splendid performance on the part of C. B. Fry, that master in all that concerns outdoor sports. Even if the performance be discounted by the fact that the Hampshire eleven, against whom the score was compiled, was not fully representative, it none the less remains that it was a highly-creditable one, and the spectators on the County Ground at Southampton were treated to a fine exhibition of free cricket. In his splendid innings of 120 were comprised a magnificent drive for six, ten boundary hits, and three threes. From the first the old Oxonian adopted forcing tactics, and it was hard luck that, after scoring the first thirteen runs on the second day, he should have been sent back to the pavilion. But the catch made by Mr. E. A. English at mid-on, which



W. A. Rouch.

CAPTAIN HOARE'S XI. GOING TO FIELD.

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W. A. Rouch.

HAMPSHIRE TAKE THE FIELD.

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disposed of the top scorer, was a really brilliant one, and should somewhat console that gentleman when he remembers his own bad fortune at the wicket.

The match was also marked by the return to form of the old Notts professional, Alfred Shaw. In the second Hampshire innings he was responsible for six wickets, which were obtained at a cost of only twenty-five runs. Although the ground was in his favour, the difficulty with which he was played on the opening day goes to show that there is still some sting left in the veteran, and it will cause little wonder if the Sussex executive make use of him in the near future. Of the other bowlers Mead alone calls for mention, for he was especially successful, his seven wickets costing only a fraction over seven runs apiece. The spectators were naturally disappointed at the failure of the Indian Prince with the bat, but his short stay at the wicket can be attributed to the indifferent state of health in which, it was said, he was at the moment.

The result of the match was not left long in doubt on the second day, and in the end Captain Hoare's XI., with a score of 181, as compared with Hampshire's efforts of 101 and 53, were victorious by an innings and 27 runs. There is no doubt that the county will put a different complexion on future fixtures. The Southampton ground is conveniently near town, and there is no reason why a large number of visitors should not attend if the play is sufficiently attractive. As the fast trains of the South Western



W. A. Rouch.

MR. C. B. FRY AFTER MAKING HIS 120

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Company accomplish the journey in about an hour and three-quarters, there is every reason to think that if Hampshire do well this season a number of people will avail themselves of the facilities afforded by the railway company.



"In Days of Old."

MR. EDWARD ROSE, the author of "In Days of Old," has fallen into the error of fashioning a series of incidents without having taken the precaution of first finding a story with which to connect them. The consequence is that his audience could hardly make head or tail of his plot, could not follow the incidents with any degree of understanding, and never once "got inside" the motives of his characters. And so the new play at the St. James's Theatre failed to please, although the superb mounting of the work by Mr. George Alexander to some extent compensated us through the eye for the disappointment of the understanding.

We are shown a pageant of the days of the Wars of the Roses—those troublous times are brought vividly before us by the skill of the scene-painter, the artist in costume, and the *me-tour-en-scène*. We see mediæval castles of gloomy splendour—the Court of Henry VI. in all its beauty and frivolity. We hear the sounds of battle, and we see the martial figures flit across the stage. Nothing finer, in these respects, could one desire. But there it stops. The author does not help us. York and Lancaster seem inextricably mixed. "A plague on both your houses," the harassed critics cried. Why the people were one moment White and the next Red, we could not discover.

And there were many other things hidden from us. Ulick, the villain, for instance. He does all sorts of villainous things, but why he does them is generally a mystery. Even a villain is not villainous purely for the fun of the thing. And how does the outlawed barbarian, who has been stealing and murdering for all his life in the safety of his outlaw's fastness, get to the Court of Margaret of Anjou, there to become, apparently, a *persona grata* with the Court? We do not know. We cannot think. Why does young Armin Beddard fall so easily into the trap so palpably laid for him by his wicked cousin, so that he turns upon his lady-love with savage fury, spurns her before the crowd, waits for no explanation, and generally behaves himself, not only stupidly, but absolutely brutally? Why? Simply because Mr. Rose had not troubled to find a proper story on which to hang the stately scenes.

There is no sequence or cohesion anywhere. From first to last we are in a maze, and in "amazement lost." We admire Mr. Alexander hugely in his fine clothes, and watch his spirit and his gallant air with an æsthetic pleasure. But we know that we are not witnessing a drama in any sense of the term. A panorama, perhaps; a spectacle certainly. But the imagination is not stimulated, the emotions are never touched. It is all so unreal, so shadowy.

"In Days of Old" has the additional advantage of fine acting. Mr. Alexander's Armin was a spirited piece of work; he threw his heart into it, and made a personal success which may in some measure console him for the reception of the play. Mr. H. B. Irving gave a weird, powerful, and thoughtful rendering to the part of the incomprehensible Ulick. That the actor interested us, as he did, is a tribute to his skill and his personality; the author had nothing to do with it. Miss Fay Davis played with her accustomed sweetness as the heroine, and Miss Violet Vanbrugh was a stately Margaret of Anjou. But no one had any real chance. Mr. Kenneth Douglas was particularly pleasing from the vigour and fresh treatment he gave to his part; Miss Julie Opp and Miss Esmé Beringer looked very charming.

DRAMATIC NOTES.

UNTIL the opportunity occurs for fuller treatment of "Change Alley," one may say that Messrs. Louis N. Parker and Murray Carson's new play at the Garrick Theatre is so prettily written, is so beautifully staged, and is interpreted by so brilliant a company, that it remains a capital entertainment, though as a play it is as weak as it well could be, because there is no dramatic plot in their work.

"A Court Scandal" at the Court Theatre has not enjoyed as lengthy a run as it deserved, and as it certainly would have attained had it been produced at a more central playhouse. It is to be succeeded by a new comedy of modern interest, entitled "Wheels within Wheels," by Mr. R. C. Carton. Mr. Carton has now reached the very front rank of contemporary British dramatists, and his work excites an amount of interest only equalled by that of Mr. Pinero, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Grundy. Unfortunately, he handicaps himself by refusing to have his plays published. They have an equal right on the library shelf with

those of the other dramatists just mentioned. (And, in parentheses, one might ask if Mr. Haddon Chambers is not intending to give permanence to his little masterpiece, "The Tyranny of Tears," by issuing it in volume?)

Mr. Carton's new play, while it has its lighter side, is a comedy in the best sense of the definition. It discusses a real matter of its time, a serious phase of life, although the method of discussion is not heavy or serious. Should it do this as successfully as "The Tyranny of Tears," like that it will be a real comedy of the nineteenth century. Superficially, we are never serious now; but the problems of life are going on all the same; the tears are there though they may be unshed. And as a comedy is a play of "manners," a mirror held up to the life of its own day, it should reflect on the stage this age of severe restraint on the surface, but of burning volcanoes beneath, where smiles hide tragedies, and good breeding masks the breaking heart. There will probably be nothing quite as serious as this in Mr. Carton's new work, and there will, one expects, be any amount of amusement; but we shall be surprised if there is not a certain gravity of purpose beneath it, as there is in all great comedies—even in "The School for Scandal"—cleverly as it may be hidden.

What a wonderful thing is prestige. An authoritative statement has appeared to the effect that no play of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones at any theatre has produced in one week receipts as large as those of "Carnac Sahib" at Her Majesty's during the same period. When we consider that Mr. Jones has written some of the great financial successes of our time, this pronouncement becomes the more wonderful. No play which one can remember received so unanimous a "slating"

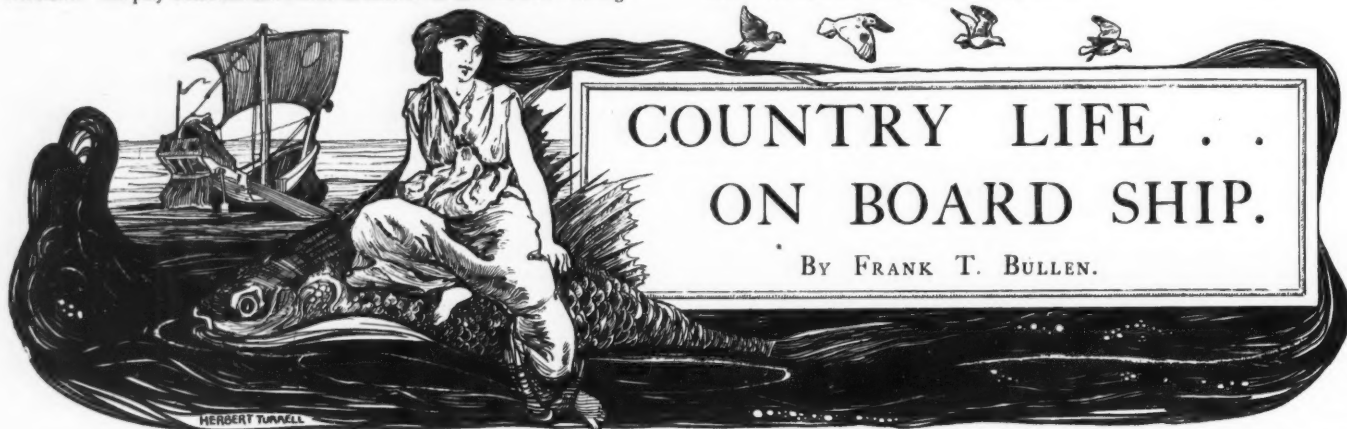
from the Press as "Carnac Sahib." Nor was the condemnation of a kind which very often sends people to the theatre—it was not based on the immorality of the play, or anything of that sort. Of course, it has frequently happened that the public has disregarded the critics and rallied to a play in spite of them.

"Carnac Sahib," as a play, may have qualities which appeal to the general public if not to the quidnuncs; or it may be that its spectacular merits have appealed irresistibly to people whose only desire is to be entertained—though spectacle very seldom turns a poor play into a success; there must of course be some reason. This reason is almost surely the personal following of the actor and the theatre. It may not last; or it may. The general public may take their lead from the 20,000 people or so who, it has been proved, will go to Mr. Tree's playhouse no matter what the entertainment. We shall see. In any case, the published paragraph is very interesting.

The younger generation is knocking at our doors, as Ibsen says. Mr. Martin Harvey, the latest recruit to the ranks of our actor-managers, has evidently "come to stay." He hopes to run "The Only Way" at the Prince of Wales's Theatre until the end of the season, then to take it on tour, and then to return to a London home which shall be permanent, with a new play by that admirable writer, Mr. Herman Merivale, based on an old Spanish poem dealing with the life and adventures of Don Juan.

Then there is Mr. Sleath, a young actor in Mr. Martin Harvey's company. He will be found in possession of the Adelphi, when the Bernhardt season is over. Of what he will do one is not yet sure.

PHŒBUS.



AT first sight, any two things more difficult to bring into intimate relations than bucolic and nautical life would appear impossible to find. Those unfortunate people who, having followed the calm, well-ordered round of pastoral progress through the steadily-succeeding seasons of many years, suddenly find themselves, by some freakish twist of fortune's wheel, transferred to the unstable bosom of the mutable deep, become terribly conscious of their helplessness in the face of conditions so utterly at variance with all their previous experience of settled, orderly life. The old order has changed with a vengeance, giving place to a bewildering seasonal disarrangement which seems to their shaken senses like a foretaste of some topsy-turvy world. Like sorrowful strangers in a strange land are they, wherein there is no sure foothold, and where, in place of the old familiar landmarks known and cherished so long, is a new element constant to nothing but change and—upon which they seem to be precariously poised—the centre of a marginless circle of invariable variability. This subversion of all precedent is of course no less disconcerting to the humbler denizens of the farmyard and meadow than it is to those who are ordinarily the august arbiters of their destinies. And a sudden change from the placid environment of the homestead, with all its large liberty and peaceful delights, to the cramped, comfortless quarters which, as a rule, are all that ship-board arrangements allow them, at once brings them to a state of disconsolate wretchedness wherein all their self-assertive individuality is reduced to a meek, voiceless protest against their hard and unmerited fate. Sea-sickness, too, that truly democratic leveller, does not spare animals, but inserts another set of totally new and unpleasant sensations into the already complicated disorganisation of their unfortunate position.

In spite of these admittedly difficult factors, I have the temerity to attempt the setting forth of certain phases of nautical life experienced by myself which have always appeared to me to bring into close contact two such widely differing spheres of existence as country life and sea life, principally in the management of farmyard animals at sea. Sailors are proverbially handy at most things, if their methods are unconventional, and I venture to hope that country readers will at least be amused by Jack's antics when dealing with the familiar creatures of the country-side.

With that wonderful adaptability to circumstances which, while pre-eminently characteristic of mankind, is also a notable quality of domesticated animals, they soon recover from their stupor and malaise, arrange their locomotive powers to suit the mutations of their unsteady home, and learn (perhaps soonest of all) to distinguish the very number of strokes upon the ship's bell which announces the arrival of feeding-time. No doubt the attentions of the sailors have much to do with the rapidity of acclimatisation (if the term may be so employed) manifested by most of the animals, since sailors have justly earned a high

reputation for taming and educating creatures of even the most ferocious and intractable dispositions. Nevertheless, this result is attained by some of the queerest and most ludicrous means (to a countryman) imaginable. But what does that matter, since the conditions of their existence then become, for the sea-worthy animals, not only pleasant but undoubtedly profitable to their owners. And where they are presently allowed the run of the ship much fun ensues, fun, moreover, that has no parallel in country life as ordinarily understood. Perhaps my experiences have been more favourably enlarged than falls to the lot of most seafarers, for I have been in several ships where the live-stock were allowed free warren; and, although the system had many inconveniences and entailed a great deal of extra labour upon the crew, there were also many compensations. But, like all things pertaining to the sea, the practice of carrying live-stock has been replaced by more modern methods. The custom of carrying fresh meat in refrigerators is rapidly gaining ground, and, in consequence, latter-day seamen find fewer and fewer opportunities for educating in seafaring behaviour the usual farmyard animals that supply us with food. By few seamen will this be regarded as a misfortune, since they find the labour quite sufficiently onerous without the inevitable and disagreeable concomitants of carrying live-stock.

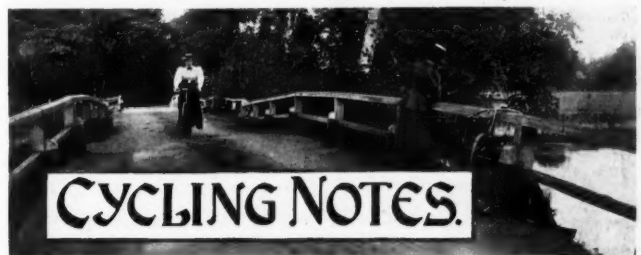
By far the largest portion of my experience of farmyard operations on board ship has been connected with pigs. These profitable animals have always been noted for their adaptability to sea life, and I fully believe, what I have often heard asserted, that no pork is so delicious as that which has been reared on board ship. Be that as it may, pigs of every nation under heaven where swine are to be found have been shipmates with me, and a complete study of all their varied characteristics and their behaviour under all sea circumstances would occupy a far greater number of pages than I am ever likely to be able or willing to give. Already I have endeavoured to set forth in an earlier number of this journal a sketch of the brilliant, if erratic, career of one piggy shipmate whose life was full of interest and his death a blaze of lurid glory. But he was in no wise the most important member of our large and assorted collection of grunTERS in that ship. Our Scotch skipper was an enthusiastic farmer during the brief periods he spent at Cellardyke between his voyages to the East Indies, and consequently it was not strange that he should devote a portion of his ample leisure to pig-breeding when at sea. For some reason, probably economical, we carried no fowls or other animals destined for our meat, with the exception of the pigs, two large retriever dogs and two cats making up the total of our animal passengers, unless a large and active colony of rats that inhabited the recesses of the hold be taken into account. The day before sailing from Liverpool a handsome young pair of porkers, boar and sow, were borne on board in one sack by the seller, making the welkin ring with their shrill protests. We already possessed a middle-aged black

sow of Madras origin, whose temper was perfectly savage and unappeasable; in fact, she was the only animal I ever saw on board ship that could not be tamed. The first few days of our passage being stormy, the two young pigs suffered greatly from sea-sickness, and in their helpless, enfeebled state endured many things from the wrathful, long-snouted old Madrassee, who seemed to regard them both with peculiar aversion. She ate all their grub as well as her own, although, like the lean kine of Scripture, she was nothing benefited thereby. But the sailors, finding the youngsters amicably disposed, began to pet them, and in all possible ways to protect them from ill-usage not only by the savage Indian but by the black retriever Sailor, who had taken up his quarters in the fo'c's'le and became furiously jealous of any attention shown to the pigs by his many masters. It should be noted that, contrary to the usual practice, those pigs had no settled abiding-place. At night they slept in some darksome corner beneath the top-gallant forecastle, wherever they could find a dry spot, but by day they roamed the deck whithersoever they listed, often getting as far aft as the sacred precincts of the quarter-deck, until Neptune, the brown retriever that guarded the after-end of the ship, espied them, and, leaping upon them, towed them forrard at full gallop by the ears, amid a hurly-burly of eldritch shrieks and rattling hoofs. I am not at all sure that the frolicsome young things did not enjoy these squaly interludes in their otherwise peaceful lives. Certainly they often seemed to court rather than to avoid the dog's onslaught, and would dodge him round the after-hatch for all the world like London Arabs guying a policeman. The only bitter drop in their brimming cup of delights came with distressing regularity each morning. As soon as the wash-deck tub was hauled forrard and the fore part of the ship was invaded by the bare-footed scrubbers and water-slingers, two hands would grope beneath the forecastle, where, squeezed into the smallest imaginable space, Denis and Jenny were, or pretended to be, sleeping the dreamless slumbers of youthful innocence. Ruthlessly they were seized and hauled on deck, their frantic lamentations lacerating the bright air, and evoking fragments of the commination service from the disturbed watch below. While one man held each of them down, others scrubbed them vigorously, pouring a whole flood of sparkling brine over them meanwhile, until they were as rosy and sweet as any cherub of the nursery after its bath. This treatment, so mournfully and regularly resented by them, was doubtless one reason why they throve so amazingly, although the liberal rations of sea-biscuit and peasoup supplied to them probably suited them as well as any highly-advertised and costly provender would have done. Their tameness was wonderful and withal somewhat embarrassing, for it was no uncommon thing for them to slip into the men's house unseen during the absence of the crew, and, climbing into a lower bunk, nestle cosily down into the unfortunate owner's blankets and snore peacefully until forcibly ejected by the wrathful lessee.

Our passage was long, very long, so that the old black sow littered off the Cape of Good Hope, choosing, with her usual saturnine perversity, a night when a howling :ale was blowing, and destroying all her hapless offspring but one in her furious resentment at the whole thing. Jenny, like the amiable creature she always was, delayed her offering until we were lying peaceably in Bombay Harbour. There she placidly produced thirteen chubby little sucklings and reared every one of them. They were a never-failing source of amusement to the men, who, in the dog-watches, would sit for hours with pipes aglow sedately enjoying the screamingly-funny antics of the merry band. There is much controversy as to which of all tame animals are the most genuinely frolicsome in their youth, kittens, lambs, calves, pups, and colts all having their adherents; but I unhesitatingly give my vote for piglings, especially when they are systematically petted and encouraged in all their antics as were that happy family of ours. Generally, the fat and lazy parents passed the time of these evening gambols in poking about among the men, begging for stray midshipmen's nuts (broken biscuit), or asking in well-understood pig-talk to be scratched behind their ears or along their bristly spines, but occasionally, as if unable to restrain themselves any longer, they would suddenly join their gyrating family, their elephantine gambols among the frisky youngsters causing roars of laughter. Usually they wound up the revels by a grand *galop furieux* aft of the whole troop squealing and grunting fortissimo and returning accompanied by the two dogs in a hideous uproar of barks, growls, and squeals.

Our stay on the coast was sufficiently prolonged to admit of another litter being produced in Bimlipatam, twelve more piglets being added to our already sizeable herd of seventeen. So far, these farming matters had met with the unqualified approval of all hands except the unfortunate boys, who had to do the scavenging, but upon quitting the Coromandel coast for the homeward passage, the exceeding cheapness of live-stock tempted our prudent skipper to invest in a large number of fowls and ducks. Besides these, he bought a couple of milch goats, with some wild idea of milking them, while various members of the crew had gotten monkeys, musk-deer, and parrots. It needed

no special gift of-prescience to foresee serious trouble presently, for there was not a single coop or house of any kind on board for any of the motley crowd. As each crate of cackling birds was lowered on deck it was turned out, and by the time the last of the new-comers were free, never did a ship's decks look more like a "barton" than ours. Forty or fifty cock-fights were proceeding in as many corners, aided and abetted, I grieve to say, by the sailors, who did all they could to encourage the pugnacity of the fowls, although they were already as quarrelsome a lot as you would easily get together. The goats were right at home at once; in fact goats are, I believe, the single exception to the general rule of the discomfort of animals when first they are brought on ship-board. The new-comers quietly browsed around, sampling everything they could get a purchase on with their teeth, and apparently finding all good alike. Especially did they favour the ends of the running gear. Now if there is one thing more than another that is sharply looked after at sea, it is the "whipping" or securing of ropes-ends to prevent them fraying out. But it was suddenly discovered that our ropes-ends needed continual attention, some of them being always found with disreputable tassels hanging to them. And when the mates realised that the goats apparently preferred a bit of tarry rope before anything else, their wrath was too great for words, and they meditated a terrible revenge. Another peculiarity of these strange-eyed animals was that they liked tobacco, and would eat a great deal of it, especially in the form of used-up quids. This peculiar taste in feeding had unexpected results. As before said, the *raison d'être* of the goats was milk, and after sundry ineffectual struggles the steward managed to extract a cupful from the unworthy pair. It was placed upon the cabin table with an air of triumph, and the eyes of the captain's wife positively beamed when she saw it. Solemnly it was handed round, and poured into the coffee as if it had been a libation to a tutelary deity, but somebody soon raised a complaint that the coffee was not up to concert pitch by a considerable majority. A process of exhaustive reasoning led to the milk being tasted by the captain, who immediately spat it out with much violence, ejaculating, "Why, the dam' stuff's pwhushed!" The steward, all pale and agitated, looked on dumbly, until in answer to the old man's furious questions he falteringly denied all knowledge of any felonious addition to the milk. The storm that was raised by the affair was a serious one, and for awhile things looked really awkward for the steward. Fortunately the mate had the common-sense to suggest that the malignant goat should be tapped once more, and the immediate result tasted. This was done, and the poor steward triumphantly vindicated. Then it was unanimously admitted that tarry hemp, painted canvas, and plug tobacco were not calculated to produce milk of a flavour that would be fancied by ordinary people.



THE Countess of Dudley has been fined for cycling on the footpath, and adds one more to the pretty considerable list of distinguished personages who have been before the magistrates for one or other of the minor offences as to which the cyclist is occasionally amenable to the law. There is so much to be said against riding on the footpath in certain circumstances that it is difficult to suggest the possibility of the practice being innocuous in country districts or of its ever being legalised in this country. But we might at least be allowed to wheel our machines on the footpath or even the pavement; or, failing this, our road authorities should be forbidden to cover the whole width of a roadway with loose stones at one time. The law appears to assume that all roads are perfect, but the cyclist has to ask himself the question, "What am I to do when the road is unridable?"

In the country there is no shadow of reason why the wheelman should be precluded from at least wheeling his machine, and even in towns and cities the pavement is surely as fit a place for a narrow cycle as a clumsy bassinette. I have watched carefully the effect of greater tolerance in this respect in France, and even wheeled a safety along several Paris boulevards; but no one has been one whit the worse, and it is a pity the law cannot be amended in Great Britain. Especially absurd is the failure of the law to make any distinction between riding and wheeling on foot, so that the rider who betakes himself to the footpath because the road is up may just as well have a run for his money.

It is much to be regretted that the writers of some of the cycling columns that appear in certain journals are not more trustworthy. It has to be remembered that though the experienced rider may merely be amused at this or that error of fact or theory, the misstatements meet the eyes of, and influence, large numbers of the inexpert. In the *Daily Chronicle* the other day a writer actually advised all and sundry to deflate their tyres somewhat, so that they would sag on greasy roads! One fairly shudders at the sight of a precept so appalling, and can only hope that no novice will have been influenced thereby. The tyres cannot be pumped too hard where side-slipping is concerned, and the effect of the sagging method above advocated would be to cause the tyre to roll,

and on shelving ground would inevitably precipitate a side-slip, as well as being at all times a source of considerable risk. The *Daily Chronicle* has incurred a very serious responsibility if it proposes to continue the enunciation of this species of advice, for something tragic may be expected as a sequel.

Mr. Justice Ross has been claiming, at the annual meeting of the Dublin District Association of the Cyclists' Touring Club, to be "the first judge ever seen upon a bicycle, though he was aware that many of his English and Scotch brethren on the Bench might to-day be seen on cycles, to the terror of all peaceable inhabitants of the districts in which they lived." Whether or not the other judges will dispute their brother Ross's precedence in this matter remains to be seen, but there are certainly a good many judges nowadays who cycle, the most noteworthy, perhaps, being Justices Romer, Henn Collins, and Sir Francis Jeune. Mr. Justice Ross, on the occasion referred to, had some pertinent remarks to offer on the subject of Irish roads, and hoped that the new authorities, into whose hands their care had recently been put, would appreciate the importance of keeping them in as perfect a condition as possible, the effect of which would be to bring a large number of visitors from across the water. He also hoped to see the local bodies lay down something in the nature of a cycle track at one side of the roads—to which the tourist will only add, "may it be soon!"

Another sad example has to be recorded of fatal foolhardiness, the more remarkable because the victim was presumably a person of intelligence, being a science master at a technical school at Gravesend. It appears that he was cycling down a steep hill to Farningham, on a bicycle which had a bandaged tyre. The brake caught in the bandage, locking the front wheel, so that the rider was thrown off, with the result that he died from erysipelas. One cannot conceive why the rider elected to use the brake in the circumstances named, or, on the other hand, if the hill was unridable without a brake, why he did not dismount and walk. Common prudence seems to desert some people when once they are in the saddle, though by good luck, rather than management, the penalty is not always as terrible as in this instance.

A Bombay Court has been wrestling with the question of the legality or illegality of letting go the handles of a bicycle. Three local cyclists were summoned for the heinous offence of riding "hands-off," and the police contended that this amounted to negligence. They produced an expert cyclist to support this view, and in the end the presiding magistrate delivered a lengthy judgment, in which he stated that the person who rode with his hands on the handle-bar was in a position to exercise all the control possible to him over his machine at the very instant he saw danger, while a person who did not keep his hands on the handles must place them there before he could claim to have all the control possible. He laid further stress on the statement that a bicycle must be propelled at considerable speed to enable it to be ridden "hands-off," and that every second of time might therefore be a matter of the greatest importance with regard to the avoidance of an accident. On the ground, therefore, that the defendants were likely to endanger some human lives, or cause hurt to others, he convicted them, but on the ground of this being the first case of the kind, he warned and discharged them. The magistrate was not altogether correct on the score of high speed being necessary to "hands-off" riding, but as the practice appears to have grown a nuisance in Bombay, owing to the bravado of new enthusiasts, it is just as well that he should have declared it illegal.

THE PILGRIM.



W. A. Rouch.

FLYING FOX.

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"FLYING FOX first, and the rest nowhere!" This is the best, and briefest, description of the first of this year's classic three year old events. Caiman, the only one of the defeated lot who was persevered with to the end, was second, though the handsome Trident, who finished third, was probably second best, and the big, half-trained Birkenhead was fourth. But none of these ever saw the way the winner went, and the two lengths by which he won might have been twenty had he been ridden out. That this colt's defeats at Kempton Park and Newmarket last year were flukes, and that he was the best of his year, I have never ceased to write in these columns ever since, and that this view of the situation was the correct one has now been amply proved. At the same time, there is no doubt that he has made more than the average amount of improvement since he was last seen in public, having grown and lengthened out to quite a surprising degree.

Possibly the fittest of the whole party was Caiman, who never looked better than he did in the paddock before the race, but it was known that he had not



W. A. Rouch.

AT THE POST FOR THE TWO THOUSAND.

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done all that was asked of him at home, and his friends were by no means confident. The beautifully-turned Trident, too, looked better, I thought, than I had ever seen him; but Birkenhead, who has lately been backed for the Derby, is a mere backward baby as yet, and does not promise to be anything like ready till later in the season. I have always wondered how it is that Flying Fox, with his two close crosses of Galopin, is such a calm and unemotional sort of horse as he had always shown himself up to last week. That something of the irritability of that fiery tribe has all the time been dormant in him was shown, however, when he helped to delay the start for nearly half-an-hour in his anxiety to get off. Off he was, however, with a vengeance, when the flag went down; at the Bushes he was four lengths clear of his field, and from there it was a mere procession. It may be that the opposition was not of the strongest, but no horse could have done more, or have done it in better style, and it is more than likely that he is a really great horse, worthy of his extraordinary line of ancestors—Orme, Ormonde, Bend Or, Doncaster, and Stockwell. At any rate, he has for ever silenced the detractors of his unlucky sire, the gamest horse that ever fought out a finish, and who has, in this year's Two Thousand winner, fulfilled the traditions of his family by siring a race-horse of the highest class at the very outset of his stud career.

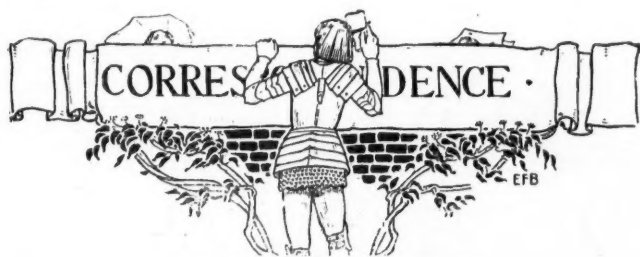
The sequence of Derby winners from Doncaster downwards was broken, it is true, with Orme, but that was not his fault, and nothing but foul play could have robbed him of the Blue Riband, which had become almost the heirloom of his family. Of his direct ancestors in tail male, Ormonde, Bend Or, Doncaster, Whalebone, and Waxy are all winners of the Derby. Whether or not Flying Fox is destined to restore the lost trophy of his line remains to be proved. That anything trained in this country will beat him is not likely, and odds are already laid on his again showing his heels to all his opponents on the 31st of this month; but that there may be danger from the other side of the Channel I still believe, knowing as I do that Holcauste is also a really good colt.

With the exception of the two sons of Orme, Flying Fox and Birkenhead, I doubt if the Two Thousand colts were a very high-class lot, but they were certainly far ahead of the fillies who took part in the One Thousand. It is true that the stable companions, Sibola and Myakka, both finished in front of Caiman in a home gallop, but as I do not know the weights they were carrying, this may not have amounted to much, and Caiman, who has evidently not come on as he should have done during the recess, was not even second best at Newmarket last week. Again, the Kingsclere filly, Princess Mary, who took part in Flying Fox's now historic trial, without even seeing the way the winner went, was only just kept out of a place in the One Thousand. The two American fillies finished close together in the gallop alluded to above,

though in the actual race Sibola, who is a lot the better-looking of the two, finished a long way in front of her stable companion. Indeed, Myakka, who has not improved since her two year old days, and looked very short of muscle, was in difficulties at the Bushes, whereas Sibola, who had her race safely won as she raced out of the dip, pursued by Fascination and Musa, passed the post three lengths in front of this pair, who finished second and third, as their names are written, with Princess Mary fifth.

The winner, who is by the sensational Cambridgeshire winner, The Sailor Prince, out of Saluda, by Mortemer, is a deep, medium-sized filly, with plenty of power behind the saddle, but without the quality of the second, a sweet little daughter of Royal Hampton, who ran well behind St. Gris and Flying Fox at Kempton Park last year. Victoria May, too, although on the small side, is full of quality, and she too ran well for some way, though she quite failed to stay, and only finished fourth. Lady Ogle, who ran fast to the Bushes, is a fine raking filly, who will improve with time, and is not unlikely to turn out the best of all those who finished behind Sibola. Strike a Light has evidently come on lately, and will no doubt make a useful filly with time, but, taken all in all, they were a terribly moderate lot for a race of this importance. Mr. Musker's Edith Crag, by Wolf's Crag out of St. Gatten's dam, St. Editha, won the May Plate in good style, and, if given plenty of time to furnish and mature, she will make a good mare.

The only fear I have ever had about Flying Fox has been in connection with his close inbreeding to Galopin. His sire, Orme, is by Ormonde, out of Angelica, by Galopin, whilst his dam, Vampire, is by Galopin; and inbreeding to such a fiery strain as this is must, to say the least of it, always be a risky experiment. Oddly enough, the Two Thousand winner had always been looked upon as quite a sober-minded youngster until last week, when he behaved in regular Galopin style until the flag fell. No doubt it was only an excess of courage on his part, but horses with anything of this temperament about them require very careful handling, and, for all his stout Stockwell and King Tom blood, it is to be hoped that he will be treated as these Galopin-descended horses always should be. Birdcatcher and Blacklock is a cross that almost always produces great horses, and in this case it is more than likely that it has given us a phenomenal one. Should Holocaste be brought over fresh and well and at his very best to run in this year's Derby, we might see one of the greatest races of history between him and Flying Fox. Another pedigree worth studying is that of the Australian-bred Newhaven II. This horse is by Newminster, son of The Marquis, by Stockwell, out of Oceana, by St. Albans, son of Blair Athol, by Stockwell, so that he is inbred on both sides of his pedigree to the greatest of all sires, whilst he also goes back to Sir Hercules through his paternal grandam, and to Van Tromp on his dam's side. Very stout breeding is this. The One Thousand Guineas winner, Sibola, is inbred on her sire's side to Touchstone, through Orlando and Newminster, whilst her dam, Saluda, goes back to Gladiator on her sire's side and to Sir Hercules on her dam's. Sibola also gets another strain of Sir Hercules on the top side of her pedigree through Lifeboat, and one of Stockwell through Albert Victor's dam, Princess of Wales; so that she is bred more or less on the good old lines of Birdcatcher and Touchstone.



SHRUBS UNDER BEECH TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have taken your paper for a long time, and find the garden notes particularly useful. Could you let me know which rhododendrons and which azaleas would do well on a bank more or less shaded by beech trees, and where things grow with difficulty; also the best places to get these plants? I was also much interested about broom and furze. Would they do well in the same place, and what kinds do you recommend? Would the sweet-scented white be hardy enough, and the scarlet and yellow kind of broom? I should be much obliged if you would give a few names. I see you say plant seeds about now; where are these to be got?—J. W. B.

[If the shade is not very dense, you might try some of the cheaper kinds of rhododendrons, not any expensive varieties, such as the Himalayan forms, as apparently the position is much shaded, and the soil beneath beech trees would be very poor. You might, however, try them, also the hardy azaleas, preparing the soil by incorporating plenty of peat into it, as without assistance of this kind vigorous growth would be impossible. Both these shrubs appreciate shade, but rather the shade that comes from shadows cast by trees near, as in the clearing of a wood, on the fringe of woodland, or by the margin of cool drives. Plenty of water would be necessary, too, in the summer, at least for a year or two, to establish the shrubs. The hardy azaleas are excellent shrubs for the garden if one can establish them, the colours ranging through many tints, white, crimson, scarlet, rose, orange, and many others, whilst some are quite double, little rosettes which last longer than the single forms. There is beauty, too, in the



W. A. Rouch.

BIRKENHEAD, CAIMAN, AND MARK FOR'ARD.

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growth, which is spreading and leafy, the leaves turning to rich brownish-crimson and crimson shades in autumn. Both broom and furze appreciate sunshine. They delight in a dry hungry soil, and we fear you will not be successful with these beautiful shrubs under beech trees. It would be waste of time and money to plant them. You can obtain seeds from any good nursery especially devoted to trees and shrubs. For obvious reasons we cannot recommend individual traders, but you should have no difficulty in the matter. You would be very interested in the broom and furze family if you could establish them elsewhere than under the beech trees; indeed, few things are happy under such conditions. If you have a better place for them, we will describe the two families for you at greater length.—ED.]

ESTABLISHING THE MISTLETOE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have just read your remarks on establishing mistletoe, and venture to give my experience. I began five years ago, and then always made a cut in the bark. This went on for two years with not a single success. I told this to an old gardener, who said, "Never cut the bark, but place seed on bark which is both smooth and clean." I followed his advice, with the most satisfactory results, and now have dozens of sprigs growing. This advice is borne out by a writer in the *Garden* of February 4th, page 80, to which I cannot do better than refer "M.L.," also to a subsequent number of the same paper, namely, that of February 25th, in which a further discussion of the question is carried on. I trust this advice may be of some use to your readers. I have mistletoe growing on apples, mountain ashes, poplars, thorns, and on a maple.—ALEX. COWAN.

PHEASANT'S EYE NARCISSUS—ANCIENT PEAS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I can quite confirm what your correspondent, "A Lover of Flowers," says regarding the Pheasant's Eye narcissus changing its form and colour, as this has occurred twice in my experience. On both occasions it took place when I was forcing them into early bloom, the outer petals assuming a pale yellow, while the eye had expanded, and became deep orange. With reference to "H.G.H.'s" letter I may state I have for six years past grown peas the original of which were taken from a mummy's hand. Their inflorescence is very beautiful, being composed of trusses of pink flowers fading to white at the edge of the petals, and they fruit very freely. The pea has very much the character of a vetch.—ROBERT BELL.

STORY OF A DACHSHUND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have a dachshund whose name is Kaiser, and I have had him about eighteen months. One year when we went to a place in North Devon called Woolacombe we took him with us, but the next year, when we went to the same place, we left him behind, and I asked my grandmother to look after him (she lives about a mile and a-half from us), but the same night he broke away and came home. On finding us gone and only the servants in the house he soon got very discontented, and went up alone to the station (which is about two miles away) and tried to get into a train, but the porters pulled him out. They kept him (although he struggled to get into other trains) until one of our servants found him there and took him home. He goes to my father's office every day at about 10.30, and lies on the mat quite quietly until about 6.30, when he comes home with him.—PHILIP ARCHER (aged 14.)

[We are glad to hear about our youthful correspondent's dog.—ED.]

WHITE RED DEER IN ENGLAND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In my article in your issue of March 25th, reference was made to a famous white stag shot A.D. 1741 by one of the Hessian Dukes. It may interest some of your readers to learn that a similar instance of white deer being the issue of a white stag with an ordinary hind, which I mention in the article, occurred also in Woburn Park. The Duke of Bedford informs me that the herd of white deer which now form such a conspicuous object in his superb park are the offspring of a white stag which the Duke's grandfather, who was Ambassador at Berlin about 1835, brought from Germany to Woburn. There were no white hinds there, and from that one white stag all the white red deer now at Woburn have sprung. They have also been sent from there to Windsor, Welbeck, and Invergary. I take this opportunity to correct a printer's error in the article in your issue of April 8th, page 426, in which Jacques du Fouilloux appears with an "a" instead of an "o".—W. A. BAILLIE-GROHMAN.

SPARROW-HAWK AND COLLARED DOVE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Is it an unusual thing for a sparrow-hawk to fly at a bird as large as the collared dove (*Columba risoria*)? We have about half-a-dozen doves that live



wild in the garden and make their nests in the trees, only coming to be fed at the drawing-room window. One day last week, whilst I was sitting at lunch in the dining-room, I saw what I took to be two doves flying very fast, one close behind the other, across the lawn; they were about a yard from the ground and came straight to the window, and when quite close to the glass the leading bird swerved off, but the other one could not stop in time, and stunned itself against the glass. On going to the window I was much astonished to find a fine young male sparrow-hawk. I carried him to an aviary, and he soon recovered, but for the dove's sake he was "detained," and I took a photograph of him, which I enclose. Query, did the dove

take him to the window purposely, knowing that it would prove his death-trap? —M. DE ROCHE.

TYPES OF POLO PONIES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Is not the variety of type noticed in COUNTRY LIFE of April 29th, 1899, among the ponies at the Dublin Show rather apparent than real? I am quite aware that disposition and aptitude to learn his work are as necessary to a pony

as make and shape. Yet a close examination of a very large number of ponies extending over many years has convinced me that certain qualifications a polo pony must have if he is to be of much use at the game. First his head and neck must be put on the right way, and a pony with a short, thick neck can never make a tournament pony. Next he must have a good shoulder, not necessarily a shoulder which catches the eye when standing alongside him, but the sort of shoulder which fills one with confidence when galloping at top speed after a polo ball; fairly sloped pasterns (for choice too much slope rather than too little). A deep girth is important. It is always worth while for an intending purchaser to measure a pony's girth if he means him to carry weight. I believe in moderate size of bone, so as to leave plenty of space for bold, large sinews. Of course, there are other points more or less desirable, but if you have these you will find that a considerable variety of type is possible, for all these points may be and are seen in English, Irish, Arabs, barbs, Argentines, and Americans. I do not say that it is always so, but I never see such necks and shoulders on other breeds as on ponies bred in these islands.—T. F. D.

HARE WARRENS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I shall be glad to know if a small stock of hares could be kept up in a fenced-in rabbit warren of about twenty-five acres, and if so, how it is to be done. There is plenty of cover, and some nice sunny banks, but no plough land. When would be the time to stock?—ARTHUR H. RYDON.

[No; we are afraid there is no hope for our correspondent. Hares never do well in an enclosed space of the size mentioned. If the twenty-five acres were a sanctuary, and the hares had full liberty to go in and out as they pleased, probably any number could be kept; but this, of course, does away with the idea of the fenced-in rabbit warren. For some reason, never to our mind satisfactorily explained—either because they sour such an extraordinary quantity of food and ground, or more probably because, although hares may be seen at the same time and the same place day after day, they travel very great distances, mostly at night—they will not do well in enclosed ground. If our correspondent cares to try for himself, he might stock his ground in January, but we advise him to rest content with his rabbits.—ED.]

WATER-DIVINERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am about to build a house in a part of Sussex where water is none too plentiful, and at present I have no supply within 200yds. of the site. I am hesitating whether to have a "diviner" down or not. Would some of your readers who have employed one give me the benefit of their experience and advice, with approximate fees?—AQUARIUS.

A RALLY SHOOT.

THIS is an illustration that requires a little explanation. It does not explain itself. At first glance one might take it for a picture of a butt for shooting driven game; but it is apparent that only game of surprisingly confident manners would face the bare structure, the shooter, his two friends, and the white-shirted assistant who are in waiting. It is, "as a matter of fact," a feature in that curious invention for shortening human life that is known as the rally shoot. It is of French invention, as we understand. Its ostensible object is the shooting of pigeons, and pigeons are the game that the shooter and his friends are waiting for. But it is pigeon shooting of a special kind. It is not that one shooter at a time stands forth and shoots at the pigeon released from one of four traps, but that the shooters are set in butts, similar to this one, on the circumference of a circle of which the centre is the place from which the pigeons are released. And the point of the performance is that at the end you shall have more dead pigeons within your own section of the circle than any of the others. If you succeed in this you are the winner of the stakes, even though, as often happens, but a small proportion of the corpses in your section are of your own killing. It is this, partly, that makes the fun of the thing; it introduces more luck into it and gives the bad shots a better chance.

But if it does this, it also gives every shooter an uncommonly good chance of being shot by every other. It is more like a battle than a peaceable amusement. In the instance of our illustration, the head-piece of the attendant in waiting—the *bret* of the Basques and Southern France—may indicate to the instructed the region in which this particular rally shoot took place, a region where French and Spanish meet, with a good intermixture of the inevitable English, so that all the elements of an exciting time are there. "There were nine of us in a one-hoss fly, and we all had whips," says someone, describing the pleasant way in which they all went, and whipped, to a church tea. It is rather like this at the rally shoot. The pigeon, let out from his trap in the centre, is like the horse that

they all have a cut at, and in the *mêlée* it is very poor luck if not one of the humans comes in for an occasional accidental cut too. In fact that is a possible termination of the rally shoot—the less courageous shooters get frightened out, and the braver remain firing till all guns are silenced by the news that someone is shot. The first news always is that he is shot dead; but fortune always favours the reckless, and generally it turns out that he is a "strong runner," ready to shoot and be shot another day. Splendid fun! And in the midst of the firing and the racket comes language of all countries and all temperatures, yells hurtling through the air as someone thinks he is hit, adjurations to

another that he is breaking the rules, that he will be disqualified, and all the rest of it, gesticulations, the bolters making a rush for it, the brave men firing at a wounded and tailless pigeon just scooting over their heads. The threat of disqualification implies that there are rules. So there are, though you would never expect it from watching the shooting. There is a rule, a very necessary rule, that no one shall fire at a pigeon on the ground, or at a pigeon not at a higher level than a man's head; but rally shoot rules are like promises and pie-crust. One of the essentials for success is a quick eye to tell you when to bob down out of the line of another man's fire, like a dabchick diving to the flash.

So then someone is hit. There is a louder yell than ever. The pandemonium is stilled in a moment. The patient is found to be no worse than he should be. Then everybody is disqualified all round for having broken the rules, the stakes are handed back, and the beauty of the whole thing is that you have had all the fun without a mite of expense except the price of the pigeons and cartridges. This is a rally shoot. There are said to be other rally shoots in which the rules are not broken, the shooters are not shot, the stakes are not returned, and there is no disqualification. It may be so; but if so, these perfectly-conducted rally shoots cannot be anything like the fun of the rally shoot conducted on the described lines as we have seen it conducted. For a man fond of "sport with a spice of danger," as the saying goes, lion shooting on foot in Somaliland is not to be compared with it.

